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CONFIDENTIAL

(12732)

F.O.

401

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

A B Y S S I N I A.

PART II.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper 10934 (1914). The Correspondence respecting Abyssinia during the intervening period appears in the Africa volumes.]

CLOSED
UNTIL

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1924.

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F.O. 401/37

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[In continuation of Confidential Paper 10034 (1914). The Correspondence respecting Abyssinia during the intervening period appears in the Africa volumes.]

1924.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Abyssinia.

PART II.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper 10934 (1914).]

[E 362/360/1]

No. 1.

Mr. Russell to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received January 11, 1924.)

(No. 125.)

My Lord,

Addis Ababa, December 11, 1923.

AS [reported in my telegram No. 72 of yesterday, I have intimated to the Abyssinian Government the decision of His Majesty's Government to withdraw their proposals in regard to the Tsana dam. I delivered at the same time a memorandum in Amharic, of which I beg to enclose herein the English version.

Only the Empress and Ras Tafari, with three subordinate officials, were present. My message, and the reading of the memorandum which followed, were received in silence and without comment. I withdrew immediately after, the audience having lasted only a few minutes. I have since received an informal request to be supplied with an English rendering of the memorandum. This shows a satisfactory degree of anxiety to ascertain its exact meaning.

I am, of course, unaware of the contents of the despatch referred to in your Lordship's telegram No. 63, but your Lordship will perhaps allow me to add that since the last turn taken by this matter, I have felt strongly that His Majesty's Government could not with dignity pursue the negotiation. I consequently learnt your Lordship's decision with much satisfaction.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum.

(Translation.)

I COMMUNICATED to my Government by telegraph the substance of the memorandum which was handed to me at my audience with your Majesty on the 16th November.

I am now ordered by my Government to inform you that they have considered what is stated in that memorandum. As a result they have come to the conclusion that the manner in which the Abyssinian Government are treating this affair shows that they wish to postpone a settlement, and that they have no sincere intention to arrange the matter by negotiation to the advantage of both countries.

I have to inform you that the British Government will in future regulate their conduct towards the Abyssinian Government in accordance with the attitude which the Abyssinian Government have assumed towards the British Government. My Government therefore order me to withdraw the proposal which I had made to you for the conclusion of a treaty.

Mr. Russell to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received January 11, 1924.)

(No. 126.)

My Lord,

Addis Ababa, December 13, 1923.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 118 of the 23rd ultimo to your Lordship, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further despatch from Mr. Consul Hodson respecting affairs at Maji.

I am making a strong protest to the Abyssinian Government against the proceedings therein reported, and especially as regards raids into British territory.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 2.

Consul Hodson to Mr. Russell.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

Maji, November 4, 1923.

I HAVE been making as many enquiries as possible respecting the recent raid by Dejazmatch Mukria.

It is now certain, so Nagadras Desta informs me, women and children were captured, and he states he has definite proof that the Dejazmatch gave to Fitaaurari Damaina to-day five adult women seized on this expedition.

This means that in all probability women and children were taken from the Ajuba River, which is in our territory, although not administered. I will find out definitely when I visit the Boma Plateau in the near future.

This is intolerable, and I feel sure you will insist on Ras Tafari taking the strongest action.

I may be excused if I bring to your notice that this was a Government expedition. Every soldier was ordered to go under severe penalties. It was led by the Governor in person Dejazmatch Mukria, and his brother-in-law, Dejazmatch Hailu. Such a thing has never been known before even in this country of extraordinary occurrences. I naturally cannot say what will happen on the frontier if this sort of thing continues. They may raid in force right into our territory. I should have said a month ago that such a thing was quite impossible, and it only shows how the situation changes from day to day.

Since my return bands of Abyssinians have left for our territory. They are guided and accompanied by Swahili poachers. There are at present only three or four of the latter in Maji. It is stated one of these bands has gone as far as the Turkwell. Dejazmatch Mukria is behind all this, sharing the proceeds of the raids, and taking over poached ivory.

All the Dejazmatch's talk of respecting our frontier, being kind to the Shangallas under his charge, &c., is pure eye-wash, if I may use such an expression. His lust for loot and gain has been whetted, and it is quite obvious nothing will stand in his way.

He has now thrown in his lot with the soldiery of the late Dejazmatch Desta, who are, one might say, without any exception, scoundrels. He has given titles to several of them and ingratiated himself in other ways.

Some idea of the quantity of stock captured may be gauged from the fact that each common soldier carrying a rifle was rewarded with five cows. As somewhere in the neighbourhood of 2,000 men went with him this speaks for itself. The influential men of course received far more. This raiding under the ægis of the Governor is highly popular. They are preparing for another expedition. Some say to raid the Niwe, a tribe living in our territory, close to the Boma Plateau. It is certain they have another raid in view, whether in their territory or ours remains to be seen.

I have, &c.

ARNOLD HODSON.

Mr. Russell to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received January 15, 1924.)

(No. 134.)

My Lord,

Addis Ababa, December 28, 1923.

IN Sir R. Rodd's note on the admission of Abyssinia to the League of Nations it is suggested that the success of her request may raise the question of terminating the Tripartite Agreement as being no longer applicable in virtue of article 19 of the Covenant. It seems improbable that the Assembly of the League will, *proprio motu*, use its powers to advise a reconsideration of the agreement, but the moment is perhaps not inopportune to ask whether altered circumstances now make it voidable and whether, if that be so, it would serve British interests to take the necessary action.

The object of the agreement of 1906 was, I take it, to obviate the occurrence of differences among the signatories. To that end they agreed to co-operate in maintaining the *status quo* in Abyssinia, and they arranged to safeguard their several interests should the *status quo* be, after all, disturbed. The other articles may be considered as incidental, and dependent for their continuance on the main purpose of the agreement. As far as that purpose is concerned the territorial integrity and political independence of Abyssinia are now guaranteed by the League of Nations. It may be arguable that it is not admissible for members of the League to enter into separate engagements to insure that which is an obligation on the whole League. If that be so, it becomes the duty of the signatories of the Tripartite Agreement, under article 20 of the Covenant, to take immediate steps to procure their release from its obligations.

Whether His Majesty's Government have ground to denounce the treaty, irrespective of their obligations under the Covenant, would seem to be also open to argument. A contract is, I think, usually held to be voidable so soon as anything which formed an implied condition of its obligatory force at the time of its conclusion is essentially altered. Whether the entry of Abyssinia into the League of Nations constitutes such an alteration is open to question. It is, however, clearly such a new factor as would authorise His Majesty's Government to submit to the other signatories the propriety of declaring the treaty null by common consent. I feel sure it is not a matter in which His Majesty's Government would wish to take unilateral action. I assume they would proceed in accordance with the treaty signed in London in 1871, and denounce the agreement only, as therein provided, "au moyen d'une entente amicale."

There remains the question of whether the agreement of 1906 serves British interests.

Article 1 relates to the maintenance of the *status quo*. The agreements which are mentioned in this article as determining the existing state of affairs are, in any case, binding on us where England is a signatory. The other agreements recorded do not, I think, materially affect us.

Article 2 has been of no effect in practice, except in so far as it has furnished our co-signatories with pretexts for obstruction. Incidentally, it is noteworthy that a concession can only be objected to by one party if it is injurious to the interests of both the others. For instance, the objection of Italy to the Tsana project on the strength of this article is, strictly speaking, untenable unless France also objects. I presume this is a case of faulty drafting, but the sense is none the less clear.

Article 3 appears to serve a doubtful purpose, and one may question whether, in the event contemplated, our interests would suffer by its elimination. In practice it would very possibly be observed without being a treaty obligation.

Article 4 only becomes operative on a disturbance of the *status quo*, and must, in normal times, be regarded as dormant. This consideration has not prevented France and Italy from invoking it against us. The provisions in it for safeguarding the interests of the signatories are sufficiently vague to insure differences of opinion as to their meaning.

Article 5. The action on this article is completed.

Article 6. If the agreement were abrogated, it would be advisable to obtain a specific understanding from the French Government in respect of equality of treatment on the railway. As regards transit dues, our position seems adequately secured by the statute signed at Barcelona in 1921.

Article 7 has been in part disregarded, and in part provides for eventualities which now appear improbable.

Article 8 presumably has reference to a French concession for a railway beyond Addis Ababa.

Article 9 reserves to England all railway construction west of Addis Ababa, and in the next sentence provides for railway construction west of Addis Ababa by Italy. Whether we should maintain our rights under this article would seem to be primarily a question for the Soudan Government. The effect of the second paragraph of the same article is to empower France and Italy to block British railway construction between Somaliland and the Soudan. The prospect of such construction must, however, be regarded as extremely remote.

Article 10 is, and I presume always has been, a dead letter.

Article 11 appears to be of no practical effect.

There is another aspect to the question. When His Majesty's Government, eighteen years ago, agreed to insure the continuance of the Abyssinian State, I presume they had regard to the then Government of the country; they had grounds to hope for the gradual consolidation of Abyssinia, and for her development on lines of ordered betterment and progress. These hopes have been disappointed. The years since the death of the Emperor Menelik have been marked by relapse, stagnation and settled opposition to reform. The present administration affords no ground for any hope of improvement. The termination of the Tripartite Agreement need bring about no fundamental change in British policy. That can remain as agreed on in 1906. But I feel that there is something wrong in the fact that England should be solemnly bound to preserve an institution which falls as far short of existing standards of civilisation as does the Abyssinian Government.

I beg your Lordship will not think that I am urging the abrogation of the Tripartite Agreement. I have an open mind on the subject. But that agreement is an important factor in Abyssinian affairs, and the possibility of its termination having been raised, I have thought right to record, however superficially, some considerations on the subject which present themselves to my mind.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

[E 585/484/1]

No. 4.

The Marquess of Crewe to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received January 19.)
(No. 127.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 17, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I addressed a note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 3670 of the 21st November last regarding the question of rationing Abyssinia with arms.

I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of the reply, which I have to-day received from M. Poincaré, to the effect that, when the League of Nations accepted Abyssinia as a member, certain duties were imposed on her and certain rights were granted to her. Not only were her territorial integrity and political independence guaranteed, but she was invited to adhere to a number of international instruments, in particular to the Arms Traffic Convention signed at Saint-Germain on the 10th September, 1919. As soon as Abyssinia, in accordance with the spirit of the Covenant of the League and in accordance with the wish expressed by the Fourth Assembly, shall have notified her adherence to that convention, she will receive all the rights conferred thereby on the other contracting parties and will be subject to the undertakings incumbent on the other signatory States holding territory in the prohibited zones specified by article 6 of the convention.

Even if the admission of Abyssinia to the League of Nations does not suffice completely to change her position in respect of the arms traffic, it cannot, in the opinion of the French Government, be contested that this position is no longer identical with that which obtained before the Fourth Assembly of the League. His Majesty's Government recognised this fact when they agreed to the French proposal of the 8th November, to invite—"out of deference to the League of Nations"—the Abyssinian

Government to be represented at the meetings of the three Ministers at Addis Ababa in order to protect her interests.

In order to enable the Abyssinian Government to keep the first of the undertakings which they solemnly gave at Geneva, to suppress slavery and the slave trade, the French Government are of opinion that the second of these undertakings regarding the import of arms should not be subject to too strict an interpretation. If Abyssinia is to abide by the principles laid down in the Arms Traffic Convention of the 10th September, 1919, and in particular by the terms of article 6 of that convention, she could not be requested to carry the observance of the present régime as regards the importation of arms and munitions to the point of accepting the particularly restricted sense attached by His Majesty's Government to the convention of the 13th December, 1906, regarding arms traffic on the Somaliland coast. The Abyssinian Government have never recognised the Conventions of London of the 6th July and the 13th December, 1906. During the last two years the French Government, out of a desire for conciliation, have not opposed the views of His Majesty's Government on this question, but now that Abyssinia has taken her place amongst the members of the League of Nations it is not possible that this independent State should be deprived of the benefits which it should by rights obtain from admission, and, in particular, of the advantages to be derived from adherence to the Arms Traffic Convention. Moreover, the French Government do not consider that the League of Nations, in accepting Abyssinia as a member, intended to impose on her a treatment different to that accorded to the other members under the Covenant and other instruments governing the conduct of the various members of that body.

I have, &c.

CREWE.

Enclosure in No. 4.

M. Poincaré to the Marquess of Crewe.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Paris, le 16 janvier 1924.

PAR sa lettre du 24 novembre dernier, relative au contrôle de l'importation des armes de guerre en Éthiopie, votre Excellence a bien voulu me faire savoir que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique n'avait pas d'objection à ce que, conformément à la proposition du Gouvernement de la République, le Gouvernement éthiopien se fit représenter aux conférences qui doivent être reprises entre les Ministres de Grande-Bretagne, de France et d'Italie à Addis-Ababa. Votre Excellence ajoutait que, ma lettre du 8 novembre 1923 faisant allusion à la situation nouvelle créée par l'entrée de l'Éthiopie dans la Société des Nations, le Gouvernement britannique tenait à déclarer qu'à son point de vue, la situation de l'Éthiopie relativement aux importations d'armes n'était pas modifiée par cette admission.

Par sa lettre du 28 décembre dernier, votre Excellence m'a rappelé la communication précédente et m'a demandé si, après nouvel examen, le Gouvernement de la République ne partageait pas l'opinion du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique.

J'ai l'honneur de vous exposer ci-après ma manière de voir.

Il n'est pas douteux que la Société des Nations, quand elle a accepté l'Empire d'Éthiopie au nombre de ses membres, lui a imposé certains devoirs, en lui reconnaissant certains droits. Non seulement elle lui garantit son intégrité territoriale et son indépendance politique, mais elle l'invite à adhérer à un certain nombre d'Actes internationaux qui sont en étroit rapport avec ses buts. Il en est ainsi notamment de la Convention de Saint-Germain du 10 septembre 1919 relative au contrôle du commerce des armes et des munitions.

Le jour où l'Empire d'Éthiopie, membre de la Société des Nations, aura—suivant l'esprit du Pacte et le vœu de la IV^e Assemblée—notifié son adhésion à la Convention de Saint-Germain, il aura tous les droits que cette convention confère aux autres parties contractantes, de même qu'il sera soumis à toutes les obligations qui incombent aux autres États signataires de cette convention, possessionnés dans les zones de prohibition spécifiées à l'article 6.

Actuellement, si la simple admission de l'Éthiopie dans la Société des Nations ne suffit pas encore à modifier d'une manière complète la situation de l'Empire relativement au commerce des armes, il est incontestable que cette situation n'est

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cependant plus exactement identique à ce qu'elle était avant la IV^e Assemblée de Genève. Le Gouvernement britannique l'a, d'ailleurs, lui-même reconnu en acceptant la suggestion française du 8 novembre d'inviter—par déference pour la Société des Nations—le Gouvernement éthiopien à se faire représenter aux réunions des trois Ministres à Addis-Ababa et à y défendre ses intérêts.

Pour permettre au Gouvernement éthiopien de tenir le premier des engagements qu'il a solennellement pris à Genève—celui de supprimer l'esclavage et de réprimer la traite—il convient d'éviter que le second de ses engagements relatif à l'introduction des armes reçoive une interprétation trop stricte. Si l'Éthiopie doit "se conformer aux principes énoncés dans la convention relative au contrôle du commerce des armes et des munitions et au protocole signé à Saint-Germain-en-Laye le 10 septembre 1919 et particulièrement aux stipulations de l'article 6 de ladite convention," on ne saurait lui demander de pousser "le respect du régime actuellement établi en ce qui concerne l'importation des armes et des munitions jusqu'à l'adoption du sens particulièrement restrictif que le Gouvernement britannique attache à la convention du 13 décembre 1906 relative à la contrebande des armes à la Côte des Somalis."

Je ne crois pas, en effet, avoir à rappeler à votre Excellence que le Gouvernement éthiopien n'a jamais reconnu les Conventions de Londres des 6 juillet et 13 décembre 1906. Au cours des deux dernières années, le Gouvernement de la République a cru devoir, par esprit de conciliation, ne pas s'opposer à la manière de voir du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique sur cette question. Aujourd'hui que l'Empire d'Éthiopie a pris rang parmi les membres de la Société des Nations, il n'est pas possible que cet État indépendant demeure plus longtemps privé des bénéfices qu'il doit légitimement retirer de son admission et notamment de l'avantage que doit lui procurer son adhésion à la Convention de Saint-Germain. Il ne semble pas d'ailleurs que la Société des Nations, en recevant l'Empire d'Éthiopie au nombre de ses membres, ait eu l'intention de lui imposer, contre toute égalité, un contrôle différent de celui qui s'exerce par elle sur ses membres en conformité du Pacte et des textes qui le complètent.

Veuillez agréer, &c.

R. POINCARÉ.

[E 1414/363/1]

No. 5.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received February 14.)

Sir,

Downing Street, February 14, 1924.

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Thomas to request you to inform Mr. Secretary MacDonald that he observes that Mr. John Harris, M.P., proposes to ask a question in the House of Commons on the 18th February on the subject of raids from Abyssinia into territory under British administration.

2. I am to invite Mr. MacDonald's attention, so far as raids into Kenya are concerned, to the letters from this Department of the 13th October, 1923, the 3rd November, 1923, and the 3rd January, 1924.

3. I am also to take this opportunity to enclose, for Mr. MacDonald's information, the accompanying copy of a despatch from the Governor of Kenya, dated the 10th January, 1924, forwarding a report of the District Commissioner, Moyale, on the subject of slave raids from Abyssinia.

I am, &c.

H. J. READ.

Enclosure in No. 5.

Governor of Kenya to the Duke of Devonshire.

(Confidential.)

My Lord,

Kenya, January 10, 1924.

IN continuation of Kenya confidential despatch of the 28th September, 1922, I have the honour to forward a report by the District Commissioner, Moyale, Captain Cochrane, dealing with the points raised in Colonial Office confidential despatch of the 16th February, 1922.

I have, &c.

(For the Governor),

E. B. DENHAM.

Captain Cochrane to Officer-in-Charge, Meru.

Moyale, October 19, 1923.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward this my report on the subject of slave raids from Abyssinia.

As the result of living on the frontier of Southern Abyssinia for some years, and of making one journey into the Abyssinian hinterland, my experience leads me to endorse the veracity of the articles, with the exception of the following statement in article 3, p. 2 (three lines from the bottom), "and within the last six months there have been several raids in Kenya colony." Judging by the context, the writer means "slave raids"; if so, I fail to understand to what he alludes.

During the period mentioned there was a big ivory-hunting raid, organised and led by Balambras Abbaba, of Agra Salaam, which was located in the vicinity of Horr by a contingent of 5th King's African Rifles under Captain Hallows, M.C. Severe casualties were inflicted and prisoners taken, and of the estimated strength of sixty raiders only seven are reported as having reached Agra Salaam. Besides this there have been several petty cattle raids which have been frustrated by our patrols; but, to my knowledge, there has been no single instance of a slave having been made in Kenya and taken across the border. We are on very confidential and good terms with our native subjects, and it seems to me most improbable that a slave raid could have occurred without our knowledge.

It is perfectly true that a tribe of people called Dais, living on the banks of Lake Rudolph, have been practically exterminated by Abyssinian raiders. They themselves have been enslaved and their small herds taken. This dates back to 1916 and 1917, and since then the Government have protected this area. I won't, however, comment further on this, as the area is outside my district, and Colonel Llewellyn, Officer Commanding Troops, Kenya, is thoroughly *au fait* with the matter, and doubtless has given first-hand information on the subject.

Up till two years ago Abyssinians were regularly coming to this office and claiming the return of absconding slaves. In no instance, do I understand, was a slave returned by us. Nowadays isolated cases occur when an Abyssinian appears at the office and says his son or daughter has been kidnapped or enticed across the border, enquiries usually show that the child is an absconding slave, and the Abyssinian leaves this office a very disgruntled being.

I will say practically every (but think every) Abyssinian on the frontier has a slave or slaves, but in cases of ill-treatment they have a safe harbour on this side, if they have the pluck to try and are successful in reaching the border.

On my return from Mega some five slaves absconded from their owners at Daka Roba and shadowed my "safari" unknown to me. Mounted Abyssinians followed me and accused my men of hiding them and helping them away. They several times galloped up to the "safari," but, as they were unable to locate the people, returned, and I regret to say caught three of them, the other two being successful in crossing the frontier.

On my visit to Fitaurari Hapta Georgis, at Mega, an Abyssinian officer was sent with an escort to meet me at Marimo. He and his soldiers were followed by absolute babies (children at home of the same age would not be allowed out of sight of a nurse-maid), who carried their rifles and ran behind their mules. Pity for them was mingled with admiration for their marvellous staying powers. Every hour or so when the mites showed signs of fatigue, their masters relieved them of the rifles and in cases took them up behind them on their mules. There are at least two or three Abyssinians living at Moyale who have slaves. It is very beastly, but what is one to do? They are mostly children, and if I took them away it would be quite impracticable to form a Government baby farm, and I could not take them and hand them over to someone else, as all are imbued with the slavery idea and they would simply become someone else's chattel. To take them away without providing for them would make their case worse than before. My police keep a careful eye on them, and any ill-treatment would receive summary punishment as in the case of anyone else ill-treating a child or assaulting a person. To sum up, the Abyssinians on the frontier have slaves, but those in proximity to the border do not ill-treat them as they have a harbour on our side.

I notice the correspondents do not state that a large number of slaves are actually purchased from their parents. This is a common practice in Southern Abyssinia, and I have known many instances. A child of 8 is bought for from 40 dollars to 60 dollars. These become the property of the buyer, who may again resell at a profit.

A curious instance is before me at present. An ex-interpreter of Moyale was

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B 4

returning here from Addis Ababa to square up his affairs. He was drowned *en route*. His wife, however, arrived, and amongst her entourage were two female slaves whom she purchased at 45 dollars per head *en route*. These children are running about the boma here perfectly happy, and appear to take an interest in their work. If I tackled the good lady on the subject, she would probably tell me that they were receiving wages. What can one do?

I have, &c.
D. E. COCHRANE.

[E 1453/484/1]

No. 6.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received February 16.)

(No. 348.)

HIS Majesty's Ambassador at Paris presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the question of the rationing the supply of arms to the Abyssinian Government.

Paris, February 15, 1924.

Enclosure in No. 6.

The Marquess of Crewe to M. Poincaré.

M. le Président du Conseil,

Paris, February 15, 1924.

IN a note dated the 16th January your Excellency was good enough to inform me of the views of the Government of the republic regarding the rationing of the supply of arms to the Abyssinian Government.

In reply to this note, I have the honour, under instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to inform your Excellency that His Majesty's Government do not, as appears to be implied in the note in question, base their views upon the Agreement of the 13th December, 1906, respecting the importation of arms and ammunition into Abyssinia, but rather upon the Arms Traffic Convention of the 10th September, 1919, which they regard as having superseded the above agreement. The admission of Abyssinia to the League of Nations does not, in their opinion, in any way absolve any of the signatories of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 from continuing to carry out the arrangement for observing certain provisions of that convention. Moreover, the Ethiopian Government is already bound by the declaration of its delegates at Geneva to recognise the system already established with regard to the importation of arms and ammunition as well as to conform to the principles set forth in the convention.

In the opinion of His Majesty's Government, it does not appear necessary for this discussion to be carried further, since they hope that the question may be satisfactorily settled by the conversations, to which your Excellency agreed in your note of the 8th November. His Majesty's Government are anxious that these conversations should now proceed, and His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa has been instructed accordingly.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[E 473/473/1]

No. 7.

Mr. MacDonald to Mr. Russell (Addis Ababa).

(No. 38.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 19, 1924.

IN your despatch No. 134 of the 28th December last you raised the question whether the admission of Abyssinia to the League of Nations could be regarded as rendering the tripartite agreement of 1906 no longer applicable in virtue of article 19 of the Covenant; and whether, if this view were to be upheld, it would be desirable for His Majesty's Government to take steps formally to abrogate that instrument.

2. The matter has received careful consideration, and I am advised that the con-

tinuance in force of the tripartite agreement is not inconsistent with the terms of the Covenant of the League of Nations for the following reasons:—

3. In examining the question, the first point which arises is whether there is anything in the tripartite agreement which must now be regarded as abrogated under article 20 of the Covenant. Notwithstanding the contrary opinion expressed in the memorandum enclosed in Lord Curzon's despatch No. 155 of the 6th September, a reconsideration of the question has caused me to arrive at the conclusion that, with possibly one not very important exception, none of the provisions of that agreement can be regarded as so abrogated.

4. Articles 1 and 4 of the agreement deal with the maintenance of the *status quo* in Ethiopia and the preservation of the integrity of that country. There is nothing in either of these articles which is inconsistent with the Covenant of the League of Nations. Even assuming that the obligations of the three signatory Powers may be regarded as covered by the provisions of article 10 of the Covenant, the fact that the three Powers are bound under the tripartite agreement to do something which they are bound to do under article 10 of the Covenant can hardly be regarded as inconsistent with the latter provision.

5. Article 2 of the tripartite agreement is clearly not inconsistent with article 23 (e) of the Covenant, and the same observations would appear to apply to articles 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the agreement.

6. The only article regarding which any doubt may be entertained is article 9 of the agreement. This reserves, so far as the three signatory Powers were in a position to do so, railway construction in certain parts of Abyssinia to Great Britain and Italy, and it may be argued that this attempt to create a monopoly is inconsistent with article 23 (e). If this is so, however, it is probable that there are a certain number of other international agreements in existence to which the same criticism would apply, and it does not appear desirable for His Majesty's Government to adopt the position that any such agreements are necessarily inconsistent with article 23 (e), especially as the reservation of railway construction in certain areas to a particular Power is not necessarily inconsistent with the equitable treatment of the commerce of other nations, which can quite easily be provided for when the terms on which the railway is to be operated are drawn up. In any case, this provision is not one of much practical importance, since I understand from you that the prospect of the construction of any such lines is extremely remote.

7. No point arises on articles 3, 10 and 11.

8. The tripartite agreement may, therefore, be held to be unaffected by article 20 of the Covenant, with the possible exception of article 9 of the agreement.

9. The next point for consideration is whether article 19 of the Covenant applies to the agreement. No question arises on the second part of that article, and the only point is whether the tripartite agreement "has become inapplicable." To some extent the observations made above as regards article 20 apply here, and, in addition, from the wording of article 19 it apparently applies only where a treaty as a whole is no longer consistent with existing conditions, and it seems doubtful whether this is so in the case of the tripartite agreement. In any case there is no question under article 19 of the tripartite agreement being in any way abrogated or superseded automatically. If article 19 applies, it only empowers the Assembly of the League to advise the parties to the tripartite agreement to reconsider that instrument, so that nothing can happen until the assembly takes such action, and it would then be for the three Powers to consider the position. If the point were considered by the assembly, they would have to consider also whether article 21 of the Covenant applies, and on the whole it would appear to do so, for, though there are no express provisions in the agreement "for securing the maintenance of peace," its general object is to eliminate disputes in relation to Abyssinia between the three signatory Powers, and it does seem, therefore, to aim at eliminating possible sources of war.

10. The foregoing arguments will enable you to appreciate the fact that the tripartite agreement is not inconsistent with the entry of Abyssinia into the League of Nations. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government do not desire to take any steps to secure the abrogation of that instrument.

11. Copies of this despatch are being sent to His Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and Rome.

I am, &c.
J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

[E 1763/360/1]

No. 8.

Question asked in the House of Commons, February 25, 1924.

Mr. J. Harris asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to a report issued more than a year ago by M. Dupuis, of the Irrigation Department in Egypt, in which attention is drawn to the vital importance of securing the safety of the waters of the White Nile for the purpose of Soudanese cotton production; whether the British Government has been negotiating with the Abyssinian Government for certain concessions on behalf of British interests for the control of the waters of Lake Tana where the White Nile rises; and if he is able to state what are the results of these negotiations?

Answer.

The Prime Minister: The answer to the first and second parts of the question is in the affirmative; the answer to the last part is in the negative. I assume by a slip the honourable member refers to the Blue and not the White Nile.

[E 1825/1449/1]

No. 9.

Memorandum on Duties imposed by the French Authorities at Jibuti on Goods in Transit to and from Abyssinia.

Treaty Series
No. 1, 1907.

THE following is the text of article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement respecting Abyssinia signed by Great Britain, France and Italy on the 13th December, 1906.

"The three Governments agree that the Jibuti Railway shall be prolonged from Diré Dawa to Addis Ababa, with a branch line to Harrar eventually, either by the Ethiopian Railway Company in virtue of the deeds enumerated in the preceding article or by any other private French company which may be substituted therefor, with the consent of the French Government, on condition that the nationals of the three countries shall enjoy in all matters of trade and transit absolute equality of treatment on the railway and in the port of Jibuti. Goods shall not be subject to any fiscal transit duty levied for the benefit of the French colony or Treasury."

A 6577/2392/1
1920.

On the 11th July, 1919, His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris addressed a note to the French Government protesting against—

1. The levy of transit and statistical duties on all goods passing through the port of Jibuti.
2. Customs duties on sporting rifles and ammunition in transit.
3. Duties levied on rice, paraffin and sugar.
4. A decree by the Governor of French Somaliland issued in December 1918 to the effect that goods destined for the different legations and consulates in Abyssinia would not be able to enter that country free of all duties unless a certificate signed by the head of the mission himself were furnished, stating that the goods in question were truly destined for the legations or consulates.

The note pointed out that the levy of transit and statistical duties constituted an infraction of article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement.

A 6577/2392/1
1920.

On the 21st July, 1919, the French Government replied that the transit through Jibuti was entirely free and that the measures were taken in virtue of the power of requisitioning consequent on a state of war.

A 6577/2392/1
1920.

On the 25th February and the 14th June, 1920, further notes were addressed to the French Government informing them that interference with the transit of goods through Jibuti was still being exercised and that a ban had been placed on the export of rupees.

A 6577/2392/1
1920.

On the 13th September, 1920, the French Government replied in a note which—

1. Maintained that the duties levied on goods in transit merely represented payment for services rendered.
2. Did not allude to the embargo on the export of rupees.
3. Stated that certificate formalities for goods for legations had been modified.

In this note they contended that such were not a breach of the agreement of 1906, maintaining that "free transit does not mean transit free of charge" ("liberté de transit ne signifie pas gratuité de transit") and that the duty was only imposed to meet the expenses involved in assuring security of trade, &c.

(His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires was, however, informed in November 1920 by the general manager of the Abyssinian Corporation that the Acting Governor of Jibuti had himself admitted that he hoped by the receipts accruing from the increased taxation on goods in transit, to improve the conditions of the colony generally, as, for instance, the establishment of schools.)

Later, however, on the arrival of a new Governor at Jibuti, conditions were somewhat improved and His Majesty's Government allowed the matter to drop.

On the 15th February, 1921, the Governor of Jibuti, with the approval of the Minister of the Colonies, published a decree imposing a 5 per cent. *ad valorem* transit duty on gold and silver bullion and specie, "for the purpose of control and verification."

(This decree came into force on the 23rd April without adequate notice, and a British Indian merchant, Muhammad Aly, who despatched 6,000 oz. of gold in ignorance was refused permission to withdraw the consignment without payment.)

On the 20th May, 1921, His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris was instructed to make immediate representations to the French Government.

The French Government replied on the 30th August, 1921, that they had referred the matter to the Governor of French Somaliland, but referred to the views expressed in their note of the 13th September, 1920, as to the general legality of the imposition of duties.

On the 18th November, 1921, on receipt of the reply from the Governor of Somaliland, they sent a note referring to the case of Muhammad Aly and completely ignoring the main question at issue, i.e., the protest of His Majesty's Government against the actual levying of the duties in question.

The Board of Trade, having been invited to submit their observations, on the 17th January, 1922, wrote proposing that the whole question of the imposition of duties on goods in transit from Jibuti should be submitted to the arbitration of the Permanent Court of International Justice. They pointed out that the real issue lay in the interpretation of article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement of 1906, and that according to the agreement of the 14th October, 1903, providing for the settlement of questions which may arise between the United Kingdom and France, such questions can be submitted to arbitration. It was unlikely that the French Government would consider this to be a matter affecting either the honour of their country or their vital interests, and it would therefore be difficult for them to resist the request for arbitration. Emphasis was laid on the point that, while it might be difficult to challenge the French view that "liberté de transit ne signifie pas gratuité de transit," the treaty position was sufficiently strong to enable His Majesty's Government to take serious objection to the present duties without relying on arguments drawn from admissions of the French Government extracted from official correspondence. With regard to the treaty position, the question was held to turn upon the meaning of the phrase at the end of article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement, "droit fiscal de transit au profit de la colonie ou du Trésor français." If the French could prove that the duties were not fiscal duties or that they were collected for some other purpose than generally for the benefit of the French colony or Treasury, His Majesty's Government's position might possibly be difficult to maintain. This is in effect the French argument. The French have probably in mind ordinary customs duties and excise duties, which are normally not allocated to any specific item of expenditure, but are devoted to the purpose of meeting the expenses of the sovereign authority of the State in carrying out the normal functions of government which would presumably include "contrôle" and "vérification." If it could be shown that these functions were exercised prior to the decree of the 18th February, 1921, there would be no doubt as to their being comprised in the normal functions of the sovereign authority of French Somaliland, and any duties subsequently exacted would in fact accrue to the Treasury as part of the ordinary revenue of the State. It would be difficult for the French Government to adopt the attitude that the duties were collected solely for the benefit of the owners of the goods and at their request, and further, that if they were not collected the owners would suffer through the non-performance of services which it is not the normal function of the sovereign authority of the State to perform. The phrase "droit fiscal" was not to be interpreted in the treaty in the limited manner adopted by the French Government. In the view of His Majesty's Government it

appeared to be a general prohibition on the levying on any goods carried by the Jibuti Railway of any duties by the French authorities over and above the ordinary railway rates. The duties set forth in the Decree of the 18th February, 1921, infringed this prohibition.

A 448/448/1

His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris was accordingly instructed to inform the French Government that His Majesty's Government considered that these duties were an infringement of article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement and to propose arbitration.

His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome was at the same time instructed to ascertain whether the Italian Government shared this view.

His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa was asked to ascertain what exactly was involved in "contrôle" and "vérification," and whether these functions were exercised at Jibuti before the 18th February, 1921.

A 2433/448/1

On the 7th April, 1922, Lord Hardinge received a note from the French Government stating that instructions had been given to the Governor of the Somali coast that consignments belonging to His Majesty's Government were to be exempted from all transit duties, and that the "droits de contrôle de vérification" on precious metals passing through the colony which belonged to the nationals of the three Powers which signed the Tripartite Agreement would be suppressed. The suppressed duties were, however, to be replaced by certain low dues in accordance with article 6 of that agreement.

A 2641/448/1

On the 15th April, 1922, Sir R. Graham reported that the Italian Government fully shared the view of His Majesty's Government, and that the Italian Ambassador had been instructed to take up the matter with the French Government.

A 2945/448/1

On the 6th May, 1922, His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris was instructed to point out that the steps proposed by the French Government in their note of the 7th April would not, in themselves, meet the objections of His Majesty's Government, which were taken not only to a fiscal transit duty on precious metals or articles belonging to His Majesty's Government, but in general to the imposition of any fiscal transit duty on any articles. Lord Hardinge was instructed again to propose arbitration. A note was accordingly addressed by Lord Hardinge to the French Government on the 11th May.

A 3746/448/1

A 3652/448/1

On the 10th May, 1922, Mr. Russell reported that he was not in a position to give a reliable reply to the questions asked him in A 448/448/1.

A 5622/448/1

On the 4th September Lord Hardinge received a note from the French Government contending that, as the average rate of the customs duties on goods in transit through Jibuti was only 93 per cent., so low a duty could not properly be described as a fiscal duty, and, further, that it was lower than the duties imposed in British Somaliland and Italian Eritrea, although by article 7 of the Tripartite Agreement similar obligations, should an analogous case arise, are laid on the neighbouring British and French colonies as are laid on French Somaliland by article 6. In view of the superior facilities offered at the port of Jibuti, such as a postal service, quays, a jetty, roads, electric light and a supply of drinking water for ships, the French Somaliland Government would be justified in imposing duties higher than those prevailing in the less up-to-date ports of British Somaliland and Eritrea. Nevertheless, the French Government, to show their conciliatory attitude, had, however, decided to consider a scheme for the revision of the customs regulations in French Somaliland, and the new duties would only be levied to meet the services rendered in the case of goods exported from or imported into the colony. These duties would be imposed uniformly on all products in transit through the port of Jibuti, even where such products were intended for local consumption or originated in the colony. Equality of treatment would thus be assured, and the system would be completed by levying the duty on an *ad valorem* basis in the same way as it was levied at Zeyla, in British Somaliland. The Board of Trade were asked for their observations on this note, and the Colonial Office were requested to supply information regarding the tariff in British Somaliland.

A 103/103/1
1923.

On the 3rd January, 1923, the Colonial Office supplied this information, and pointed out at the same time that the eventual application of article 7 of the Tripartite Agreement did not affect the present conditions in which the transit of goods was carried on through Somaliland, as no railway had yet been constructed through that colony into Abyssinia.

A 898/103/1

On the 14th February, 1923, the Colonial Office wrote to say that the rates charged on goods in transit through British Somaliland to Abyssinia had been reduced from 2 to 1 per cent. *ad valorem*.

A 2760/103/1

On the 9th May, 1923, the Board of Trade replied to Foreign Office letter of the 23rd January. They considered that the proposed *ad valorem* tax was not justified by the presence of the facilities at the port of Jibuti enumerated in the French note of the

4th September, 1922. These facilities were in all probability already paid for by traders through harbour, tonnage and other dues which would continue to be charged by the port authorities even when an *ad valorem* tax was introduced. The Board of Trade suggested that His Majesty's Government might intimate to the French Government that, having regard to the Freedom of Transit Convention, they would be prepared to agree to a modification of the Tripartite Agreement of 1906, whereby the imposition of dues collected with reference to the additional cost of the customs administration attributable to the transit traffic, and not exceeding 1 per cent., might be permitted subject to the concurrence of the Italian Government. In reply, the Foreign Office reminded the Board of Trade on the 28th May, 1923, that article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement of 1906 provides that "goods shall not be subject to any fiscal transit duty levied for the benefit of the French colony or Treasury." Article 7, moreover, provides for a similar exemption from transit duty on any British or Italian railway into Abyssinia, but, as no such British or Italian railways exist, it is clearly immaterial what duties are at present charged in British Somaliland or Eritrea. The Foreign Office pointed out that it was specifically stated in article 10 of the Freedom of Transit Convention that the convention was not retroactive, and the agreement of 1906 could therefore only be modified with the consent of all parties. This consent the Foreign Office did not desire to give, and they preferred to renew, if possible in conjunction with the Italian Government, the request to the French Government to submit the question to arbitration.

A 2760/103/1

On the 21st June, 1923, Lord Crewe was instructed to ascertain from the French Government precisely what were the services rendered at the port of Jibuti which the new taxes were designed to cover, to provide them with a copy of the British Somaliland Customs Ordinance, and to explain that article 7 of the Tripartite Agreement did not at present apply owing to the fact that no railway into Abyssinia had been constructed from that territory.

A 3563/103/1

The French Government, in their reply of the 16th July, 1923, again enumerated the services set forth in their note of the 4th September, 1922 (A 5622/448/1 of 1922).

A 4283/103/1

The Foreign Office thereupon wrote on the 24th July to the Board of Trade that the best course appeared to be to press the French Government to submit the question to arbitration, and that the necessary preliminary would be to consult the Italian Government with a view to joint representations.

A 4283/103/1

The Board of Trade replied on the 23rd August, 1923, that the reason why they still found difficulty in concurring in the submission of the question to arbitration was that it appeared to be impossible to say what was the duty to which His Majesty's Government took exception or even what was the point of principle in regard to which the British view differed from the French. The 5 per cent. duty on gold and silver bullion which occasioned our protest to the French in 1921 had been withdrawn, and it was not known whether the proposed new transit duty had ever been put into operation or whether, when it was, it would include anything which was not an equitable charge in respect of services rendered at the port and not already paid for. They suggested that His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa should be asked to furnish an up-to-date report on the present charges and facilities in the port of Jibuti, and that meanwhile there would be no harm in sounding the Italian Government as to their general attitude towards the questions involved.

A 5106/103/1

The Foreign Office decided that, in view of the doubtful attitude of the Board of Trade, Mr. Russell should be consulted as the Board suggested. This was done in a despatch dated the 12th September, 1923. Meanwhile it was decided to take no step *vis à-vis* the Italian Government until the receipt of Mr. Russell's reply.

A 5106/103/1

On the 16th November, 1923, Mr. Russell furnished information about dues on precious metals, which showed that "droits de contrôle et de vérification" had been abolished only on "argent battu ou laminé monnayé," but that a 2 per cent. charge, multiplied by a coefficient of 2, was made on other precious metals, such as gold and platinum.

A 7136/103/1
1923.

Certain negligible charges on dollars in transit existed, but gave rise to no complaints. Mr. Russell promised a further report on other charges and on the facilities at the port of Jibuti.

This further report not having yet been received, Mr. Russell was asked to expedite it on the 12th February, 1924.

A 7136/103/1
1923.

Foreign Office, February 28, 1924.

[E 1918/363/1]

No. 10.

Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received March 3.)

(No. 122.)

THE High Commissioner for Egypt presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which has been sent by the Governor-General of the Soudan to His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa respecting raids by Abyssinian poachers in the Soudan.

Cairo, February 23, 1924.

Enclosure in No. 10.

Major-General Sir Lee Stack to Mr. Russell.

(No. 30.)

Sir,

Khartoum, February 8, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to refer to my despatch No. 150 of the 12th December, and to inform you that on the 26th January a section of the Eastern Arab Corps, while engaged in selecting a suitable site for a post on the Rashah, had a brief encounter with a small party of Abyssinian poachers near Meshra Mangara, situated about latitude 12° 41', longitude 35° 39', and roughly half way between Meshra Fadl Inglezi and Meshra Fazira.

Numerous footmarks had suggested the presence of Abyssinians, and early on the morning of the 26th January scouts discovered two Abyssinians crouching in the long grass; they were unarmed, and on being questioned denied the presence of any other Abyssinians in the vicinity. Later in the morning, however, a patrol of twenty-five men was sent to investigate further, and located a group of five armed Abyssinians with three mules and one donkey. The patrol succeeded in getting within twenty yards of this group, and a warrant officer, a native of Abyssinia, called on them to put down their rifles and surrender, and at the same time the officer in command of the patrol and a sergeant stood up. An Abyssinian opened fire and a short skirmish took place, which resulted in two of the Abyssinians being killed, and one seriously wounded; he is believed to have since died of his wounds. From the fact that one of the Abyssinians sounded a call on a small hunting horn, it is probable that other Abyssinians were in the neighbourhood, but owing to the difficult nature of the ground, further search was impossible.

Four rifles and ninety-nine rounds of ammunition were captured, also three mules and eight donkeys, skins and stores.

The site selected for the new post is Meshra Fazira referred to above,

I have, &c.

(For Governor-General of the Soudan.)

WASEY STERRY.

[E 2074/360/1]

No. 11.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received March 7.)

(No. 12.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, February 1, 1924.

I BEG leave to enclose herein, for purposes of record, the English text of the proposed agreement respecting the Tsana dam, an Amharic version of which was communicated by me to the Abyssinian Government in May last. Some rearrangement and verbal modifications of the draft referred to in Lord Curzon's telegram No. 20 of the 27th April have been made for the sake of clarity, and to meet the exigencies of translation. The material omissions and alterations are, of course, those subsequently approved by your Department.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 11.

Text of Proposed Agreement respecting Tsana Dam.

THE Ethiopian Government will permit His Britannic Majesty's Government to construct a dam across the Blue Nile at the outlet of that river from Lake Tsana for the purpose of regulating the flow of water from the lake.

2. The Ethiopian Government will permit His Britannic Majesty's Government to maintain and control the dam as may be necessary after its construction.

3. The Ethiopian Government will permit the entry into Abyssinia of the engineers, and labourers, skilled and unskilled, who may be necessary for the construction, maintenance and control of the dam.

4. The Ethiopian Government will grant to His Britannic Majesty's Government a lease of land contiguous to the outlet of the lake for the erection thereon of the buildings necessary to the aforesaid engineers and labourers.

5. The Ethiopian Government will permit His Britannic Majesty's Government to obtain materials in the neighbourhood of the lake for all work in connection with the dam.

6. The Ethiopian Government will permit His Britannic Majesty's Government to place steamers and boats on the lake for the transport of materials required in connection with the dam.

7. The Ethiopian Government will permit His Britannic Majesty's Government to construct and maintain a road between Gallabat and Delgi for the purpose of transporting materials necessary for the dam, and they will permit buildings to be erected at Delgi in which to store such materials. This road shall be free to use of travellers and traders.

8. His Britannic Majesty's Government, in consideration of what has been agreed on above, guarantee the payment to the Ethiopian Government of—

- | | |
|--------|---|
| (a.) £ | on conclusion of the present agreement. |
| (b.) £ | on completion of the dam. |
| (c.) £ | yearly from the 11th September (Abyssinian New Year's Day) after the completion of the dam. |

9. The present treaty shall be ratified and the ratification shall be exchanged at Addis Ababa as soon as possible. It shall come into force on the date of the exchanges of ratifications.

[E 2142/484/1]

No. 12.

Memorandum on the Importation of Arms and Ammunition into Abyssinia.

THE position up to the beginning of 1922 is summarised in a memorandum by Mr. Sperling, dated the 13th February, 1922. The supply of arms to Abyssinia had been a constant source of anxiety to His Majesty's Government for the last twelve years, notwithstanding the provisions of the convention on the subject signed by Great Britain, France and Italy on the 13th December, 1906 ("Treaty Series No. 2 (1907)"). The root of the difficulty has lain in the conflicting interests of the three Powers. Italy has been as a rule opposed to the introduction of any arms at all, because she expects some day to assert by force her claim to absorb the greater part of the country. His Majesty's Government are anxious to maintain the stability and independence of Abyssinia, and would therefore raise no objection to the supply of arms to the Ethiopian Government, provided that the arms remained in the possession of the Central Government instead of drifting into the hands of provincial authorities but loosely controlled by the Central Government, who use them for raids after slaves and cattle into British East Africa and the Soudan. Eighty-six such raids actually took place between 1908 and 1918. Although since then their frequency has diminished somewhat, four serious raids occurred in 1923. The French Government, having no territory adjacent to Abyssinia which can attract raiders, are indifferent about the use to which imported arms are put, and favour their importation really in order to provide Jibuti with a much-needed source of revenue and to curry favour with the Abyssinian Government at the expense of Great Britain and Italy, though, when taxed with indifference, they maintain that the Abyssinian Government must be allowed arms in order to suppress slavery. His Majesty's Government, however, argue

that no Abyssinian Government can keep its arms in its own hands for long, and that, even if it succeeded in preventing them from getting into the hands of the tribes, the Government who, while professing a desire to abolish slavery actually encourage it, would never dare or even desire to suppress the system of serfdom which has been part of the economic organisation of the country from time immemorial.

When the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 was drawn up (Treaty Series No. 12 (1919)), we caused to be inserted therein an article (No. 10) specifically intended to stop the promiscuous introduction of arms into Abyssinia. No country is actually named in that article, but its object was clearly explained by the British negotiations and perfectly understood by the French Government. Its practical effect is to require the unanimous consent of the three limitrophe Powers before arms can be imported into Abyssinia.

The Arms Traffic Convention of 1919, for reasons shown in a Foreign Office memorandum of the 6th June, 1921, the principle of which was its non-ratification by the United States of America, has never yet been ratified, and is not therefore technically in force. Nevertheless negotiations took place between Great Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and Japan, as the result of which it was decided that, pending ratification, the convention and protocol should be enforced as regards the prohibited areas (article 6), which include Abyssinia. This decision has been held by the Foreign Office to connote that the 1919 convention now supersedes the "convention regarding arms" of the 13th December, 1906. In other words, the importation of arms and ammunition into Abyssinia is now regulated by article 10 of the 1919 convention.

The correspondence on the subject has during the last three years mainly revolved round three points:—

- (a.) *The Aden Consignment.*—The proposed importation into Abyssinia of a consignment of six machine-guns, six repeating rifles and 30,000 cartridges ordered in the United States and paid for personally by Ras Tafari about the year 1920. This consignment reached Aden, where it was detained for some time. The French Government were anxious that it should be admitted as a personal favour to Ras Tafari. The Italian Government were definitely opposed to the suggestion, but on the 29th December, 1921, gave way. Major Dodds, in his despatch No. 100 of the 3rd August, 1922, urged that His Majesty's Government should release the Aden arms. This was done shortly afterwards.
- (b.) *The Arms Rationing Scheme.*—A proposal which originated in the Foreign Office in 1921 to arrive at an agreement with the French and Italian Governments to supply in rotation to the Abyssinian Government 500 new rifles annually in exchange for a similar number of old ones, the object being definitely to fix an annual quota to be admitted into Abyssinia and to put an end to the perpetual bickering about casual consignments. The stages by which this scheme has progressed will be shown below, and it will suffice at this point to state that, although the idea is accepted in principle by the three Governments, the actual quota is still unsettled and no actual result has yet been achieved.
- (c.) *The Jibuti Arms.*—While scheme (b) above was in discussion with the other interested Powers, Major Dodds telegraphed on the 19th November, 1922, that the authorities at Jibuti, with the sanction of the French Minister at Addis Ababa, had allowed Ras Tafari to purchase and bring back with him secretly 2,000 rifles and 20,000 cartridges. Major Dodds and the Italian Minister both protested to his Highness, who excused himself by saying that if the French were willing to sell he could hardly be expected to abstain from buying. The French Minister disingenuously tried on the one hand to excuse himself by saying that he only gave permission for the purchase of 200 or 300 rifles and Ras Tafari had deceived him by buying 2,000, while, on the other hand, he argued that Abyssinia was a sovereign State and might import whatever arms she wanted.

This action led to a strong protest to the French Government by His Majesty's Government.

The French reply was entirely unsatisfactory, and Lord Crewe was consequently instructed on the 10th February, 1923, to ask the French Government whether he might assume that M. de Coppet and the Jibuti authorities would be reprimanded for their conduct.

No such reprimand having been administered, the argument on this question lingered on throughout 1923 without any satisfaction being obtained. On the 10th September Lord Crewe informed the French Government that the matter would be raised by the British representative at Geneva in connection with the application of Abyssinia for admission to the League of Nations. M. Poincaré, on the 14th September, 1923, replied that in the event of such publicity being given to the case, he presumed that there would equally be no objection to his communicating to the League at the same time the notes setting forth the French argument.

Eventually, however, the case was, owing to a misunderstanding by the British delegation, never referred to at Geneva, and the question of publication of the correspondence with the French Government on the subject has therefore been dropped.

The incident of the Jibuti arms emphasised the importance of putting into force the arms rationing scheme referred to above (b). The history of this scheme is as follows:—

On the 20th February, 1922, the French and Italian Ambassadors were invited to ascertain the views of their Governments on the proposal that the representatives of the three Powers at Addis Ababa should be instructed to concert in deciding *ad referendum* a reasonable quota of arms and ammunition to be admitted into Abyssinia annually. His Majesty's Government tentatively suggested 500 rifles as sufficient.

Mr. Russell, on the 8th February, 1922, submitted his observations on the scheme.

On the 25th March, 1922, the French Ambassador accepted the proposal, though at the same time he made no comment on the suggested quota, and indulged in a long dissertation on the Convention of 1906.

On the 30th March Lord Curzon replied to the French Ambassador, reminding him that we considered that the Treaty of the 13th December, 1906, was superseded by the Arms Traffic Convention of the 10th September, 1919, which instrument should form the basis for the discussions to be held at Addis Ababa.

On the 2nd August a meeting of the representatives of the three Powers took place at Addis Ababa. The Italian Minister was sympathetic to the scheme as propounded by Mr. Russell, but had no instructions from his Government. The French Minister thought that a quota of 3,000 rifles would be more appropriate. All favoured the idea of the surrender of old arms in exchange for new arms.

On the 11th September, 1922, Lord Curzon suggested to the French and Italian Ambassadors that the above plan should form an integral part of the rationing scheme.

This was agreed to by the French Ambassador on the 5th October.

On the 28th October, 1922, the Italian Ambassador at last replied to Lord Curzon's note of the 20th February. He argued at considerable length that the importation of arms into Ethiopia, even if it were desirable, could not be effected without contravening the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919, and stated that the Italian Government was unable to agree to any proposal short of absolute prohibition.

On the 20th November Lord Curzon replied to this note, pointing out that the Arms Traffic Convention had never been ratified, and that at present, in accordance with the decision of the 28th July, 1920, at the Ambassadors' Council, the protocol could only be regarded as applying to the provisions of the convention relating to the prohibited zones specified in article 6. Under the last paragraph of that article arms can be supplied to the Abyssinian Government under special licence.

On the 21st February Mr. Russell reported that the Italian Chargé d'Affaires at Addis Ababa had still received no instructions to take part in the discussions, which were, therefore, entirely held up.

Consequently, on the 19th March, 1923, a note was addressed to the Italian Ambassador urging the Italian Government to reconsider their attitude and agree to the proposal for arms rationing.

On the 22nd March, 1923, the Italian Ambassador replied that the newly appointed Italian Minister at Addis Ababa would be instructed, before his departure for his post, to act in concert with his allied colleagues in the question of arms rationing.

On the 30th May Mr. Russell was instructed to enter upon the discussions with his French and Italian colleagues as soon as possible.

On the 1st June, 1923, Mr. Russell reported that such a conference had already been held at the British Legation, when the Italian Minister had stated that he could not formally agree to the British scheme without reference to his Government. The French Chargé d'Affaires had urged that the quota should be 3,000 rifles; an offer of only 500 rifles to Ras Tafari would bring upon them *une réponse désobligeante*. Mr. Russell and the Italian Minister stood out for a lower figure. The three repre-

representatives agreed that it would be useless to ask for old rifles in exchange for the new.

The French and Italian Governments were asked for their views on the present state of the negotiations.

In a note, dated the 2nd August, 1923, the French Government replied. They agreed to drop the exchange of old arms for new. They also agreed that the three Governments should supply the ration in rotation. They reiterated their old arguments for a quota of 3,000 rifles, i.e., the approximate number annually introduced, via Jibuti, before the war.

[NOTE.—The demand that the number of rifles under the rationing scheme should be equal to that imported before the war would, if acceded to, completely stultify the whole scheme.]

The Italian Government were asked for their observations on this note.

Meanwhile the Abyssinian Government had applied for admission to membership of the League of Nations, and a somewhat new situation was held to have been created thereby.

On the 9th September, 1923, the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs replied that they agreed in principle with the British views regarding arms rationing. They regarded 500 as a suitable quota. They agreed that it would be useless to insist on old rifles being exchanged for new. They agreed to the supply of the annual quota of the three Powers in rotation. They proposed that discussions *ad referendum* between the three Ministers at Addis Ababa should be resumed in order to formulate detailed proposals.

On the 23rd September Lord Crewe was accordingly instructed to invite the French Government to agree to the resumption of the discussions at Addis Ababa and to inform them that His Majesty's Government favoured the course proposed by the Italian Government, and considered 500 an adequate quota.

Meanwhile, in September 1923 Abyssinia was admitted to membership of the League of Nations, after making formal declarations about slavery and arms traffic. The declaration made regarding arms traffic reads as follows:—

"Abyssinia, recognising as binding the system at present established with regard to the importation of arms and ammunitions, undertakes to conform to the principles set forth in the convention and protocol signed at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the 10th September, 1919, and in particular to the stipulations contained in article 6 of the said convention."

Abyssinia, as a member of the League, is now therefore entitled to accede to the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919.

On the 8th November, 1923, M. Poincaré replied to Lord Crewe's note. He agreed to the resumption of discussions at Addis Ababa, but proposed that, as an act of defence to the League of Nations, of which Abyssinia was now a member, the Ethiopian Government should be asked to nominate a representative to attend these discussions. He repeated that the proposed quota of 500 was insufficient, but left a certain amount of latitude to the French Minister at Addis Ababa.

We agreed to M. Poincaré's suggestion, and instructed Mr. Russell on the 21st November, 1923, to resume the discussions with his French and Italian colleagues and, in concert with them, to invite the Abyssinian Government to nominate a representative to take part in them.

At the same time Lord Crewe was instructed to address a note to the French Government notifying them of the above decision, but stating that, in the view of His Majesty's Government, the position of Abyssinia in regard to the importation of arms is not affected by her admission to the League. (There is some doubt whether this last statement was ever conveyed to the French Government.)

On the 28th November, 1923, Mr. Russell reported that the Abyssinian Government appeared to be taking the line that, in view of Abyssinia's admission to the League, she could, by acceding to the Arms Traffic Convention, acquire the right to import all the arms she pleased.

On the 24th December, 1923, Mr. Russell telegraphed that his Italian colleague considered that before inviting the Abyssinian representative to take part in their deliberations it would be better to settle the general principles of the scheme, as otherwise the meeting would resolve itself into an argument between British and Italian representatives on the one hand and French and Abyssinian on the other.

In reply, Mr. Russell was told to find out what instructions the Italian Minister had received from his Government. He was also told to refuse to discuss the thesis that Abyssinia was now entitled to unrestricted importation of arms by virtue of her membership of the League.

On the 16th January M. Poincaré addressed a long note to Lord Crewe contending that the situation was in effect completely altered by Abyssinia's admission to the League.

In reply Lord Crewe was instructed to explain to the French Government that His Majesty's Government did not base their arguments upon the 1906 agreement, but upon the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 (in particular upon the last paragraph of article 10). The admission of Abyssinia to the League in no way absolved any of the signatories of the Arms Traffic Convention from continuing to observe such provisions of that convention as were actually in force.

In any case, His Majesty's Government did not desire to continue this argument with the French Government, because they hoped that a satisfactory settlement would be arrived at at Addis Ababa.

Mr. Russell was also instructed on the 11th February to continue to endeavour to arrive at a settlement by meetings with his colleagues.

Meanwhile, M. Preziosi of the Italian Embassy, on the 31st January enquired whether His Majesty's Government would agree to the proposal that the British and Italian Ministers at Addis Ababa should arrive at a preliminary agreement about the quota of arms before the full meetings were resumed, and stated that his Government considered 500 rifles a reasonable basis for discussion.

We agreed to this suggestion, and telegraphed to Mr. Russell accordingly on the 8th February, instructing him to arrive at a preliminary understanding with his Italian colleague.

On the 14th February Mr. Russell telegraphed that he and the Italian Minister had agreed on a quota of 600 rifles per annum and 500 rounds of ammunition per rifle.

V. A. L. MALLET.

Foreign Office, March 7, 1924.

[E 3354/353/1]

No. 13.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received April 14.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, March 21, 1924.

ON receipt of Lord Curzon's despatch No. 162 of the 15th September, I addressed an enquiry to the Abyssinian Government in regard to the case of attempted slave-trading therein referred to. After prolonged delay and repeated reminders, I received a reply to the effect that the matter was an internal concern of the Abyssinian Government, respecting which they did not feel called upon to furnish information. On receipt of this communication, I pointed out to Ras Tafari that the slave-trade was an international question, in which His Majesty's Government took a legitimate interest, and in regard to which Abyssinia had recently given undertakings to the League of Nations. I said that I hoped he would reconsider the propriety of the note he had addressed to me, and that meanwhile I would abstain from communicating it to His Majesty's Government. I have now, after further insistence, received a second note in the same sense as that mentioned above. I have acknowledged receipt of it, and expressed my opinion that the tone and substance of His Highness's reply will create a regrettable impression on His Majesty's Government.

I have ascertained privately from Ras Nado, Governor of the province where the case occurred, that no mention of the matter was made to him by the Central Government.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

[E 3447/363/1]

No. 14.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 25.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, March 27, 1924.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 43 of the 27th ultimo, I note that in your reply to the question in Parliament on Abyssinian raids into British territory there is no mention of an incursion into Somaliland which took place in August last. I beg to transmit herewith a despatch from the Governor of that colony on the subject of which I had expected your Department to be informed through the Colonial Office. I have not thought it necessary to trouble you with the enclosures to Colonel Summer's report which contains the depositions of witnesses to the raid.

On receipt of the information in question I addressed a strong representation to the Abyssinian Government making demands in the sense of the fourth paragraph of Colonel Summers's despatch. I have not yet been able to obtain satisfaction. I recently saw Ras Tafari and informed him that I must make a point of this matter being settled before his departure for Europe.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 14.

Colonel Summers to Mr. Russell.

Sir,

Governor's Camp, Sheikh, October 10, 1923.

I HAVE the honour to refer to your telegram of the 8th September and my reply dated the 13th September and to forward a full report of the occurrence referred to in the latter part of my telegram.

2. The rumour which reached the heir apparent with regard to my having crossed the border with an armed party is of course entirely baseless. At the end of August I proceeded from Hargeisa to Buramo, but at no time on this journey did I cross the border or approach it very closely. The road which I followed is quite direct via Gibeli and Arroberar. It so happens that on this journey I received a report of the raid into British territory by an Abyssinian tax-collecting party, which is dealt with fully in the enclosure to this letter. In this raid a British-protected subject was killed, many others were fired upon and a certain quantity of property stolen. Had the natives not driven off their stock, it is not to be doubted that further property would have been taken. The raid occurred two days before my arrival on the scene. The Abyssinians have doubtless concocted the story of my crossing the border in order to cover their own violation of British territory.

3. These incursions of Abyssinian tax-collecting parties into British territory have constantly occurred in the past and I think you will agree with me that it is highly desirable to take steps to prevent them. In 1917 the late Governor, while in that part of the protectorate, actually apprehended a large party in British territory under Tekla Hwariot, late Governor of Jigjiga. In 1919 repeated raids into British territory were carried out by parties of Abyssinians under one Ato Mangasha. They have been of not infrequent occurrence since, though the Abyssinians have usually refrained from using violence. In the raid now reported they abandoned this precaution. These raids usually occur in the neighbourhood of Jifa Medir, where the boundary is most clearly marked by the hills of Jifa Medir, Egu and Sau. The Abyssinians are well aware of the position of the border and know that they are within their rights in camping at Ow Burreh, which is just on their side. This point forms a useful base for raids into British territory. The status of the Gadabursi tribe is, of course, well known to you. There has been some correspondence as to the status of certain sections who normally reside in Abyssinian territory, but the British Government, on the expressed opinion of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, have maintained the standpoint that members of the Gadabursi tribe as a whole are British-protected subjects. When the boundary was fixed by the Rennell Rodd Treaty of 1897 it was agreed that Gadabursi grazing or living for the time being in Abyssinian territory were subject to the jurisdiction of the Abyssinian Government while in Abyssinian territory. Whether this entitles the Abyssinian Government to levy taxes from them is open to doubt, but in view of the recognised difficulties connected with it, this Government has not so far opened the question. That the Abyssinians have no right whatever to enter British

territory and attempt to levy taxes either with or without violence from the Gadabursi or any other tribes is not open to question. I am well acquainted with the area and there is no doubt whatever as to the villages attacked being within British territory, and this is borne out by the bearings taken by Captain Long on the hills of Egu, Jifa Medir and Jifa Uri from the scene of the occurrence. The villages are of a semi-permanent nature and surrounded with cultivation.

4. In the circumstances I consider that the Abyssinian Government should be called upon to return all property stolen to the value of 200 rupees, to pay full compensation for the man killed at a rate according with Somali custom, namely, 100 camels of an average value of 2*l.* or 200*l.* in cash. Further, I consider that they should be called upon to express their sincere regret for the occurrence and to give assurances as to the future. I should be grateful if you would be so kind as to inform me of your views on the subject and as to what action you deem it desirable to take to obtain compensation for the outrage and ensure against further occurrences of this nature in the future. I also suggest for your consideration the desirability of calling in question the conduct of the Governor of Jigjiga who is undoubtedly to blame for permitting such occurrences of which he cannot fail to be aware. That the Abyssinians have thought fit to trump up a story about my having crossed their border with an armed party in order to cover their conduct hardly calls for comment in the circumstances. I do not think that the fact that some Somalis are willing to guide these raiding parties in return for bribes has any bearing on the matter.

5. I regret that this despatch has been delayed through my having called for compass bearings in order to obviate any doubt as to the position of the place where the outrage occurred in regard to the Anglo-Abyssinian border.

6. The raids usually occur at the same time of year, namely, July, August and September. If it is not possible to obtain redress and some reasonable assurance for the future, it will be necessary to take military measures in the future to protect the border. These will involve special financial provision and I should greatly regret such a necessity.

I have, &c.

G. H. SUMMERS, Governor.

[E 3448/1730/1]

No. 15.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 26.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, March 27, 1924.

I BEG leave to refer to my despatch No. 10 of the 31st January respecting the Special Court.

When the new French Minister arrived here not long since, I spoke to him on the subject in question. I said he would doubtless, before long, become aware of the deficiencies of the Special Court, and that if, like myself, he thought the matter called for action I should welcome his co-operation. M. Gaussen replied that he would give his attention to the question. A few days ago he came to see me. He said he had now been here long enough to appreciate the truth of my remarks, and that he agreed that some effort must be made to remedy the present state of affairs. I advised that we should address a joint remonstrance to the Abyssinian Government, and, a draft note having been elaborated between us, I was able to obtain also the signatures of the Belgian Minister and the Italian Chargé d'Affaires. I have the honour to enclose herein a copy of the note. The German Chargé d'Affaires has written separately in the same sense, but omitting the last paragraph, as Ras Tafari is not visiting Germany, and the reference to his visit to Europe is consequently inapplicable to the German Government.

This is the first time, since I have been here, that joint action has been taken by the Legations on any subject. I hope that the fact of our unanimity on this occasion will convince the Abyssinian Government that they can no longer ignore the many complaints that have already reached them independently in the same connection.

I trust that, as regards His Majesty's Government, you will not disapprove the suggestion contained in the last paragraph of the note. I feel that, if nothing is now effected here, the best hope of reform lies in action such as is therein foreshadowed.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 15.

British, Belgian, French and Italian Representatives to Ras Taffari.

Monseigneur,

Addis-Ababa, le 25 mars 1924.

NOUS croyons devoir attirer l'attention particulière du Gouvernement impérial sur la situation actuelle de la justice, à Addis-Ababa notamment, et en premier lieu sur le fonctionnement du "Tribunal spécial" de cette ville.

Cette juridiction, avec son juge intérimaire actuel, ne répond pas à l'idée qui avait présidé à sa création. Nous avons à nous plaindre en effet, non seulement de la lenteur excessive de la marche des procès, mais aussi de la manière trop souvent insuffisante dont l'équité est comprise, dans les jugements relatifs aux étrangers.

De plus, une fâcheuse irrégularité préside aux réunions mêmes du tribunal, soit que le juge, au cours de l'audience, se retire brusquement pour répondre à un appel venu du dehors, soit qu'il néglige de faire prévenir les représentants des Légations de l'ajournement d'une séance ou des procès qui seront appelés à une séance déterminée.

Nous savons que votre Altesse se préoccupe, à bon droit, de la question générale de l'organisation de la justice dans l'Empire. Avec celle de la sécurité, c'est celle qu'il est le plus important peut-être de résoudre si l'on veut que les étrangers qualifiés se montrent enclins à traiter avec vos nationaux des affaires comportant des engagements réciproques, c'est-à-dire susceptibles d'entraîner éventuellement des litiges.

Le désir marqué par l'Abyssinie d'entrer en relations plus étroites avec les nations étrangères, le besoin qu'elle éprouvera sans doute, de ce chef, de développer les ressources du pays grâce à des capitaux, et à des techniciens, venus du dehors, nous font un devoir, dans l'intérêt de l'Empire autant que dans celui de nos compatriotes, de signaler à votre Altesse la gravité et l'urgence de la question.

Il n'est pas possible, votre Altesse le comprendra certainement, d'attendre une codification éventuelle des lois et usages locaux pour porter remède à la situation actuelle. Il est indispensable de mettre sans délai, à la tête du tribunal, soit un Abyssin à la hauteur des fonctions délicates qu'on lui confie, soit un étranger de réputation intacte et de compétence juridique reconnue.

Si le Gouvernement impérial trouvait un de ses sujets capable, comme l'a été le premier juge, de remplir sa tâche à la satisfaction des étrangers et des Abyssins, il conviendrait alors de réserver la place nécessaire à un juge européen pour la juridiction d'appel, de façon à ce que, à l'un des deux degrés au moins, il y ait un juge connaissant le droit international.

Sur ces divers points, nous avons d'ailleurs déjà été en pourparlers actifs avec le Gouvernement impérial, puisqu'un projet de règlement provisoire avait été élaboré et appliqué même dans certaines de ses parties. Nous pourrions en reprendre l'examen avec profit.

Nous signalons la présente démarche à nos Gouvernements afin de les mettre en mesure d'en entretenir éventuellement votre Altesse au cours de son prochain voyage en Europe.

Veuillez, &c.

CLAUDE RUSSELL.
GÉRARD.
GAUSSEN.
R. BOVA SCOPPA.

[E 3883/353/1]

No. 16.

Consul Home to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 5.)

(No. 1.)

Sir,

Dangila, March 22, 1924.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 2, dated the 26th November, 1923, I have the honour to submit herewith my memorandum on the slave trade in my consular district of North-West Abyssinia.

I am addressing copies of this report to His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa and to the Director of Intelligence, Soudan Government.

I have, &c.

A. D. HOME.

Enclosure in No. 16.

Memorandum on the Slave Trade in North-West Abyssinia, 1924.

NORTH-WEST ABYSSINIA is regarded as bounded on the south by the River Blue Nile.

Slave raiding from this area into British territory does not occur, nor is slave raiding practised to any extent in the area itself.

Several thousand slaves are bought annually from areas south of the River Blue Nile, such as the Province of Kaffa and the feudatory State of Jimma, for sale in the Province of Gojjam. They are ordinarily of pagan tribe origin. Trustworthy estimation makes the annual number about 10,000, of whom about one-tenth are purchased by residents in Gojjam and the remainder for resale in Northern Abyssinia.

The price of a strong young slave, either male or female, in Gojjam is about 45 to 60 Maria Theresas (about 7l. at the present rate of exchange and about 5l. at par rate of exchange). Very black-skinned persons fetch the highest price, as they are easier to identify as slaves if they run away from their masters. Young children under 10 years of age are sold for about 70 Maria Theresas; the higher price is due to their being more likely to obey than grown persons.

The sale of slaves in Gojjam is not usually effected in the open market places, but is carried on in huts near by. The market officials charge dues, amounting to from 4 to 6 dollars for each slave, on the entry to and departure from the market areas; these dues are collected on behalf of the Governor of Gojjam Province.

In certain Gojjam markets forty or more slaves are purchasable at any time.

The Governor of Gondar has forbidden slave trading in his provinces; but public order is normally bad in his provinces and slave trading continues with the connivance of his officials. One of the latter was asked recently if this trade had been stopped, whereupon he said that a notice on the subject had been put up in his market, but slaves had not been told of its contents. Of course the slaves are illiterate.

The practice of slave trading and the price of slaves have decreased in recent years owing to ordinary trade depression and the consequent lack of purchasing power among the inhabitants.

The slave traders consist of Christian and Mahomedan Abyssinians.

A. D. HOME, Consul.

Dangila, North-West Abyssinia,
March 22, 1924.

[E 4161/3835/1]

No. 17.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 18.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, February 16, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to enclose herein some notes on the foreign representatives in Addis Ababa.

I have, &c.

CLAUDE RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 17.

Report on Heads of Foreign Missions in Addis Ababa.

Belgium.

M. Maxime Gérard has been here since June last as Minister Plenipotentiary of Belgium. A Belgian consul-general had spent some months here in the previous year, but there had never hitherto been a Belgian Legation. This innovation is due to a monopoly in alcohol for which a concession was obtained two years ago from the Abyssinian Government on behalf of a Belgian group. M. Gérard had left the public service and was a shareholder and commissaire of the Régie impériale des Alcools en Ethiopie when it was decided to appoint a representative in Abyssinia to further the interests of the company. M. Gérard's knowledge of the matter suggested his appointment, and he accepted it on condition that he received the rank of Minister.

[12650]

c 4

He has held a number of consular posts and spent some years in Bombay. He speaks English well. M. Gérard was overwhelmed with attentions by the Abyssinian Government on his arrival, and they placed the former Russian Legation at his disposal, and did it up for him. But his novelty has now worn off, and he is having a trying time in his efforts to induce the Abyssinian Government to carry out their undertakings and turn the alcohol monopoly into a going concern. The Belgian Government and the directors of the Régie in Belgium complain of unaccountable delays for which they are inclined to make M. Gérard responsible. He is much harassed, and his diatribes on the subject of Abyssinian official methods do one good to bear. M. Gérard and his wife are genial and unaffected people. They are of the middle class, and obviously prosperous. As regards M. Gérard's official activities, he is admittedly here as agent of the Régie, and he shows no disposition to busy himself with other matters, or go, in any way, *ultra crepidam*.

Italy.

M. Gino Macchioro Vivalba arrived here in May last. He came from Riga, which was his first diplomatic appointment, his previous service having been in consular and colonial posts. When he arrived here he found plenty to do. The Legation had been for six months in charge of an inexperienced honorary attaché. M. Piacentini, the previous Minister, was a true son of Macchiavelli, and, in his intervals of good health, was too busy interfering in the affairs of other Legations to mind those of his own. Count Colli, who was Minister before him, reserved himself for politics, and left current affairs to his staff. As a result of all this, the entire work of the Legation had become concentrated in the hands of an ex-non-commissioned officer who came here twenty-four years ago as a telegraphist, and thereafter, having married Countess Colli's maid, was appointed vice-consul. M. Macchioro disapproved of this state of things, and proceeded to remedy it. He set his staff to work, and the vice-consul, M. Bertolani, a very capable man, was sent home. In reporting to Rome on these matters, M. Macchioro found occasion to criticise his two predecessors, and they, being invited to explain themselves, retaliated with effect. M. Macchioro had only been here a few months when he received a curt telegraphic intimation that his mission was terminated. He says he is going to take up an important appointment at the Consulta, but according to an Italian press announcement, which has an official appearance, his destination is Helsingfors.

M. Macchioro is meticulous, and essentially of the "functionary" type. His heart is in his profession, and he has few, if any, interests outside it. I found him always socially pleasant, and in official dealings he seemed reliable. He is a Trestino, and is said to be of Jewish origin. M. Macchioro is separated from his wife. They parted in Riga, according to Mr. Vaughan, "under circumstances which provoked a good deal of comment." M. Macchioro is now in treaty with the Holy See for a decree of nullity.

France.

M. Edouard Gaussen arrived here in November last. He had held consular posts up to his appointment to Buenos Aires in 1918, and had latterly been inspector of diplomatic and consular establishments at the Quai d'Orsay. M. Gaussen was appointed here at his own request. He had been for some time a candidate for the post, presumably on financial grounds, for the French Minister in Addis Ababa receives a total annual salary of near 100,000 fr. gold, a rate which must allow of appreciable economies. M. Gaussen has been described by His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris as reputed "extremely able and energetic." My acquaintance with him hardly allows me to estimate his abilities, but there is no doubt of his energy, of which he has already given proof to the Abyssinian Government. I am glad to say he shows a marked disinclination to adopt his predecessor's attitude of obsequious approval of every action or inaction of the Government to which he is accredited. M. Gaussen is frankly critical of much that he sees here. He is even espousing the causes of French citizens who have grievances against the Abyssinian Government, and in one instance has asked His Majesty's Minister to arbitrate—a double proceeding from which M. de Coppet would have recoiled. I am hopeful that this welcome change may result in a measure of unanimity among the Legations, where common interests are concerned, which has hitherto been regrettably absent.

M. Gaussen has much of the vivacity of the south, whence he comes. He is a cultivated and agreeable conversationalist, perhaps a little too much given to facetiousness. He is married to an amiable woman and has a family of small children. He is of a managing disposition, and, in spite of his diminutive physique, he will never

be exposed to the reproach under which his predecessor suffered, namely, that of being hen-pecked.

Germany.

M. Weiss has now been here more than three years as substantive Chargé d'Affaires. He had previously held consular posts in China. M. Weiss is occupied with the affairs of the German colony, and attempts to take no part in larger matters. He and his wife are a pleasant, unassuming couple with intelligent interests. They know English well, and he is fond of borrowing English newspapers and books from me. They feel the misfortunes of their country, and go little into such society as there is here.

It will be noted that the above-mentioned gentlemen have all passed their official lives in consular posts, and it is, I think, apparent that they have not that breadth of outlook, nor that usage of the world, which are bred in the freer atmosphere of capital cities and amid the wider interests of international affairs. My colleagues here seem to me a little conscious of my greater professional experience, and perhaps also a little anxious to impress on me that they think no better of me for it.

[E 4162/360/1]

No. 18.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 33)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 9, 1924.

I BEG leave to refer to Mr. Ingram's memorandum on British and Italian interests in North-East Africa, a copy of which has reached me in the confidential print (see "Egypt and the Soudan," Part XCV, No. 12, p. 14).

The statement in the penultimate paragraph that "there is no direct evidence to warrant the assumption that the Italian Government are definitely obstructing British aims at Tsana" is strictly true. Yet I cannot doubt that the Italian Government entered a very forcible caveat with the Abyssinian Government as soon as they became aware that His Majesty's Government had made a concrete proposition for the construction of the dam. I think such a step may be assumed as the natural corollary to the protest addressed by the Italian Embassy in October last to your Department. I have not thought it expedient to show curiosity here on the subject, but Ras Tafari has urged in conversation with me that among the difficulties which this question presents is the fact that "others are always telling us not to do it."

In considering this question it should be borne in mind that Italy hope some day to dominate, if not to possess, the country in which Lake Tsana is situated, and they believe (not wholly without reason) that the reversion of that country is assured to them by the Anglo-Italian Protocol of the 15th April, 1891. But if England obtains an important concession, involving works at the lake and the permanent control of them, the Italian Government believe, and rightly, that their hopes in respect of the most valuable portion of the country in question will be extinguished for ever. Mr. Ingram says that "it should not prove impossible to arrive at some working understanding with the Italians . . ." and I trust this may be so, for I have always held that we shall not otherwise attain our purpose. To that end I believe that the Italian Government must be first convinced that, having regard to British interests in the Soudan, His Majesty's Government will not, under any circumstances, allow the control of the headwaters of the Nile to pass to a European Power, and that any such aspiration on the part of the Italian Government is an empty dream. When the Italian Government are persuaded of this, there will arise the question of at what price we can buy off their opposition to the Tsana project, and at what further price secure their support. In my opinion, for the purpose in question, it is very necessary that we should have their active support. This was also Lord Curzon's view, as appears from his despatch to Lord Allenby No. 1347 of the 29th November. At what cost Italian co-operation can be obtained is a point on which I can, of course, express no opinion. The Italian Government may ask for some *quid pro quo* in Abyssinia of an analogous nature, or they may ask for compensation in the shape of British territory. They will argue that they are abandoning an asset the reversion of which is assured them by treaty, and it is an asset on which they are entitled to place a high value.

As regards territorial compensation, I must say that my residence in this part of Africa inclines me to think that some of the adjacent British possessions comprise much land which might be discarded without moral or material loss, and in some respects profitably.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

[E 4163/363/1]

No. 19.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 35.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 15, 1924.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 25 of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to enclose herein a translation of a note from the Abyssinian Government on the subject of the raid which took place at Hendesa, in Somaliland, in August last. As stated in my despatch, I made every effort to obtain a settlement of this matter before Ras Taffari's departure for Europe, and it is only after repeated reminders and by constant pressure that I obtained the reply enclosed. This note is not, in my opinion, written in good faith, but merely to gain time and avoid a conclusion. I have expressed my hope to the Governor of Somaliland that, immediately on the return of His Majesty's consul to Harar, he will require Dejazmatch Imaru to carry out his instructions and accompany him to Jigjiga, and that every effort may be made to establish the facts beyond question.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

Enclosure in No. 19.

(Translation.)

Ras Taffari to Mr. Russell.

(After greetings.)

WITH reference to your letter in which you inform me that certain Abyssinians have crossed the frontier through Somaliland and committed murder and robbery in British territory, and requesting that this matter should be examined, I have to inform you that I sent an order to my representative in Harar, who made enquiries from the officer-in-charge of Jigjiga, and received a report on the subject. On seeing the report made by the officer-in-charge of Jigjiga I find the account of this matter to be entirely different from the report which was sent to you by Captain Long. Therefore, unless both parties bring the men who have knowledge of the matter in question, and unless both tribes are called and examined on the subject, it is impossible to say whether Captain Long's report or the report of the officer-in-charge of Jigjiga is false or true. I suggest that Dejazmatch Imaru, who is my representative, and the British consul at Harar should go down to Jigjiga and summon both tribes for the necessary examination. If they agree they will settle it between themselves, but if not we shall have to settle it here.

As I am now sending orders to Dejazmatch Imaru to do so, I ask that you should also inform the British consul at Harar and the Government of British Somaliland on this subject.

Dated the 13th April, 1924 (5th Miazia, 1916).

(Seal of Ras Taffari.)

[E 4164/360/1]

No. 20.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 36.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 17, 1924.

I RECEIVED a visit from Ras Hailu, who has arrived here to accompany the Heir Apparent to Europe. Ras Hailu is a son of the late Tekla Haimanot, Negus of Gojjam, and succeeded him in the governorship of that province, but without, so far, receiving the regal title. Ras Hailu's birth and the wealth and situation of his province give him a great name in Abyssinia. He is a man with whom the Central Government

have to reckon. His daughter is one of Lij Yasu's wives and has herself a daughter. This connection might well incline him, if occasion offered, to favour a restoration of the ex-Emperor. He had not visited the capital for over four years, and has evidently no great respect for the present Government. He is considered ambitious, and he gives an impression of energy. Unlike most Abyssinians I have met, he struck me as an alert man with whom one might talk and come to a conclusion. The outlet of Lake Tsana is in his province, and he spoke freely of the barrage scheme, of which he seemed to have a good understanding. He expressed himself as entirely favourable to it, and unable to understand the objections of the Central Government. He told me that he had received orders from them not long ago to insist on the immediate departure of the Tsana Mission. He had, however, taken on himself to disregard these instructions, and the mission would leave at their own convenience. In general, he expressed very friendly sentiments for England, and he evidently appreciates the importance of good relations between his province and the Soudan. This is an attitude which, for obvious reasons, it is in our interest to cultivate. The Ras told me that not long since he had received a visit at his capital of Debra Markos from two Italian official emissaries from Eritrea. They told him that they knew he was receiving large presents of arms and ammunition from the British Government, but that he would do much better to trust the Italian Government, who would give him all he required in this way, including cannon. He replied that the English had given him no arms, and refused the offer.

Ras Hailu has a good appearance and a full share of the good manners which mark his countrymen. On being told that the portraits which hang on the wall were of the King and Queen, he rose from his chair and bowed to that of His Majesty.

The Ras was reckoned the most doubtful starter of those selected to accompany the Heir Apparent on his foreign tour, and his arrival here for the purpose has removed doubts as to the realisation of that much-discussed journey.

I hear from Mr. Consul Walker that Ras Nado of Gorei, who is also going to Europe, proposes to return to his province via Egypt and the Nile. I would suggest that an opportunity be taken to invite Ras Hailu to take the same route on his return to Gojjam.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

[E 4165/484/1]

No. 21.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 39.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 18, 1924.

THE Italian Chargé d'Affaires to-day informed me that he had received the instructions of his Government in respect of the matters referred to in my telegram No. 6 of the 14th February, and that he was now authorised to act, in conjunction with the French Minister and me, in regard to the proposed issue of arms to the Abyssinian Government. Ras Taffari, however, having declared that nothing of importance is to be dealt with in his absence, we agreed that it would be futile to initiate any action in the matter now. The French Minister expressed the opinion sometime since that, in view of the Ras's impending departure, any discussion of the matter would be fruitless, as it was probable that His Highness intended to broach the arms question himself during his visit to Europe.

The "arms rationing scheme" would therefore appear to be again in suspense, and I venture to suggest that an opportunity occurs for a reconsideration of the matter. I beg to recall the fact that the project in question was elaborated in your Department without reference to this Legation, and adopted contrary to my considered opinion. I adhere to the view expressed in my despatch No. 10 of the 8th February, 1922. It is now more than two years since the Abyssinian Government made a request to be allowed to import arms, I submit that it would be wise not to reopen a sore subject with consequences that cannot be foreseen. It is not likely that any offer we may make will be accepted by the Abyssinian Government. On the contrary, they may take the opportunity, on the strength of their membership of the League of Nations, to make demands to which we shall be unable to agree, but in which they will not improbably have the support of the French Government. France and Italy, for different reasons, have always given the rationing scheme something less than lukewarm approval.

I take this opportunity to refer to the Foreign Office memorandum of the 7th March last on this subject (see the 10th March, Section 1, p. 2, antepenultimate paragraph). I was absent from Addis Ababa when the meeting of the 2nd August, 1922, took place, and the Legation was represented by the Chargé d'Affaires. I have never held that the proposed exchange of old arms for new would be a useful or practicable operation.

I have, &c.
CLAUD RUSSELL.

[E 4166/1730/1]

No. 22.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 40.)
Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 18, 1924.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 26 of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to enclose herein a translation of a reply received by me from the Abyssinian Government in response to the joint protest of the Legations against the maladministration of justice in the Special Court. As I had foreseen, our combined action promptly brought the Abyssinian Government to book. I feel no great confidence that the new judge will be better than the old; but the humble tone of Ras Taffari's note and his evident alarm that our respective Governments should be informed of our complaints are good symptoms, and I am in hopes that, now that the principle of a common European interest in the matter has been established, it will not be dropped until substantial and permanent reforms have been achieved. With this purpose in view, and so that the Abyssinian Government should not think that we accept their action as a final and satisfactory solution, we addressed to them a further note, of which a copy is herein enclosed.

I have, &c.
CLAUD RUSSELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 22.

Ras Taffari to Mr. Russell.

(Translation.)
(After greetings.)

I HAVE very carefully read your letter of the 26th March, 1924, which was signed by yourself and colleagues. As it is my constant wish that justice should be done in the whole of Ethiopia, I established a Special Court in the town of Addis Ababa, as you are fully aware, in order that justice should be done and authority be enforced among the people. As I am also anxious that the duties of the Special Court and the work of all other courts in Abyssinia should be carried on satisfactorily in the future, I intend to make alterations in order to ensure the best course of procedure, and I have therefore given orders that the opinion of various persons should be consulted. It is evident that some time is necessary to examine and alter such important matters, and to instruct the judges in them. Though I was pleased with the establishment of the Special Court and hoped that its proceedings would improve little by little, and that it would also be a good example for all the other courts, you inform me that the present judge is not doing his work as he should. I have therefore given orders that he should cease his duties at once, and have ordered Nagadras Afaworq to be a temporary judge and to carry on the work in the Special Court until I return from Europe. But as it is perfectly easy and practicable for you and myself to examine and settle the question of the Special Court, which was established for the advantage of Abyssinians and foreigners, I was very sorry to hear that you deem it right to inform your respective Governments on the subject.

Though I have now ordered Nagadras Afaworq to carry on the work of the Special Court for the time being, I have decided to make arrangements and settle the question of justice as soon as I return from Europe. My constant wishes and thoughts are to strengthen our friendship with the foreign Governments by mutual agreement in our relations, which friendship I wish to preserve and leave behind me for the benefit of Ethiopia. Therefore, if you would periodically inform me of any ideas which suggest

themselves, and which would be agreeable both to Abyssinia and your respective Governments, I shall be very pleased and sincerely grateful for your kindness, which I assure you I shall not forget. Also I trust that you and all your colleagues will not withdraw from me your help and advice, which is very necessary to me to strengthen in the future the friendship which joins Ethiopia and your Governments together.

TAFFARI MAKONEN.

March 29, 1924 (*Magabit* 20, 1916).

Enclosure 2 in No. 22.

Diplomatic Body to Ras Taffari.

Monseigneur,

Le 11 avril 1924.

NOUS avons l'honneur d'accuser réception à votre Altesse de la lettre, en date du 3 du présent mois, par laquelle elle nous avise qu'elle a remplacé le juge du Tribunal spécial, dont nous lui avons signalé l'insuffisance, par le Négadras Afaworq. Nous vous remercions de cette décision, et nous espérons que le nouveau magistrat, malgré son manque de préparation, se montrera à la hauteur de la tâche dont il est chargé à titre provisoire.

Votre Altesse veut bien nous faire connaître, en outre, son intention de reprendre l'examen de l'organisation de la justice dès son retour de voyage, en vue d'y donner une solution définitive. Nous sommes très heureux de prendre acte de cette décision, et nous tenons à faire remarquer que si nous avons jugé devoir mettre nos Gouvernements au courant de la question, c'est uniquement pour permettre à votre Altesse de causer utilement avec eux des réformes dont elle envisage la nécessité, tout spécialement, nous l'espérons, en ce qui concerne la désignation d'un magistrat européen pour l'un des deux degrés de juridiction, dans la capitale.

Les assurances que nous donne votre Altesse de son désir de collaborer avec nous, pour l'établissement d'un régime judiciaire de nature à satisfaire les divers intérêts en cause, nous sont très précieuses, et nous avons plaisir à lui en témoigner notre particulière satisfaction.

Veuillez, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.
GAUSSEN.

GÉRARD.
BOVA SCOPPA.

[E 4167/353/1]

No. 23.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 41.)
Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 18, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to enclose herein an official French translation of a recent edict regulating the manumission of slaves. This edict, while not affecting the legal status of slavery, provides for the liberation of slaves in various circumstances. Most notably it accords freedom in the future to the children of slaves from birth (article 16) and freedom to all slaves seven years after the death of their masters (article 7).

The measure seems reasonably conceived, and in theory calculated to deal gradually with an evil which it would admittedly be difficult to abolish out of hand. At the same time, one may doubt whether, in a country like Abyssinia, public opinion and the force of long usage will allow the co-operation necessary to make effective a social law of this order, and also whether the authorities concerned will be at pains to enforce it. Moreover, the order of things foreseen by the edict entails the formation of a new body of officials and the erection of public institutions and schools. One may fairly question whether the Abyssinian Government have the energy, the powers of organisation, or the funds to meet these requirements. I recommend that in a year from now enquiry be made as to the measures taken to provide them.

The appearance of the decree at this juncture suggests that it has been published with a view to impressing a section of public opinion in Europe.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

Règlement pour la Liberté des Esclaves et pour les Conditions de leur Vie.

A DIFFÉRENTES reprises, nous avons publié des édits interdisant la traite (vente et achat) des esclaves. Animé du ferme désir de réglementer par tous moyens possibles la liberté des esclaves et leurs conditions de vie, nous avons édicté le présent règlement :

Article 1^{er}. Si on libérait d'un seul coup les esclaves qui avant même la publication des édits appartenaient déjà à leurs maîtres, ils pourraient devenir des voleurs, des bandits et des malfaiteurs, qui troubleraient l'ordre public. Ils resteront donc entre les mains de leurs maîtres.

Art. 2. S'il est prouvé que les esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits ont été l'objet de sévices de la part de leurs maîtres, ou s'ils ont été mal habillés ou mal nourris, et si les juges nommés à cet effet, après avoir examiné la question, sont convaincus que les esclaves ont été réellement maltraités, ils convoqueront leurs maîtres et, après leur avoir fait donner des garants et les avoir réprimandés, ils les leur rendront sous condition qu'ils ne les priveront plus d'habillement ni de nourriture et ne les feront pas travailler d'une façon inhumaine. Mais si de nouveau ils les maltraitaient et les privaient de nourriture et d'habillement et s'ils les faisaient travailler d'une façon inhumaine, ces esclaves auront le droit d'être libérés.

Art. 3. Les esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits et baptisés sous le parrainage de leurs maîtres ou sous celui des enfants de leurs maîtres seront libérés, car ces derniers n'ont pas le droit de les traiter comme esclaves.

Art. 4. Si les maîtres ont instruit par leur propre volonté les esclaves achetés par eux avant la publication des édits et s'ils en ont fait des prêtres, des diacres, ou officiers dans l'armée, ils n'ont pas le droit de les garder comme esclaves et ceux-ci seront libérés.

Art. 5. Si les esclaves achetées avant la publication des édits venaient à avoir des enfants par l'union avec leurs maîtres ou les fils de leurs maîtres, ces derniers n'ayant plus le droit de les considérer comme esclaves, ils seront libérés.

Art. 6. Si les esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits, quittant leurs maîtres, sont arrêtés aux postes frontières et aux différents kellas, ils seront logés pendant huit jours dans l'immeuble construit à cet effet par le Gouvernement. Si dans ce délai de huit jours leur maîtres ne sont pas venus les rechercher, ils seront libérés et ne pourront plus retomber à l'état d'esclavage.

Art. 7. Si les maîtres des esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits venaient à mourir sans mentionner dans leur testament la libération de ces esclaves, ceux-ci, à compter de la date de la mort de leurs maîtres, resteront dans leurs maisons, feront célébrer des messes de requiem pour le repos de leurs âmes pendant sept ans et à l'expiration de ce délai ils seront libres.

Art. 8. Jusqu'au jour où les esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits auront leur libération, ils serviront exclusivement leurs maîtres. Il est formellement interdit de les céder moyennant un prix ou gratuitement à des parents ou à des tierces personnes. Les esclaves qui se trouveraient être cédés à d'autres seront libérés.

Art. 9. En cas de divorce, si le mari et la femme reconnaissent que leurs esclaves, achetés avant la publication des édits, l'ont été moyennant une somme d'argent, on demandera d'abord aux esclaves avec qui ils veulent rester. Les esclaves qui désireraient rester avec le mari resteront avec lui ; ceux qui voudraient rester avec la femme, resteront avec elle.

Celui des deux époux que les esclaves par affection préféreront suivre, devra à l'autre une somme d'argent basée sur le prix auquel l'esclave avait été acheté ; mais il est formellement interdit d'estimer et de partager les esclaves comme des bêtes de somme.

Art. 10. Les esclaves capturés pendant les expéditions et avant la publication des édits, seront libérés après la mort de leurs maîtres et ne pourront en aucun cas être transférés aux enfants de leurs maîtres.

Art. 11. Si les esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits sont arrêtés, voyageant seuls aux postes frontières et aux différents kellas, ils seront présentés devant les juges du lieu, qui les questionneront. Dans les villes et dans l'intérieur du pays personne autre que leurs maîtres n'a le droit de les arrêter. Il est formellement interdit de donner aucune somme d'argent à la personne qui les aurait arrêtés et amenés.

Art. 12. Il est formellement interdit aux maîtres des esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits d'arrêter et d'emmener par force chez eux les esclaves qui se sont

échappés sans les avoir préalablement présentés aux juges et sans que ceux-ci aient examiné les motifs de leur fuite, et si les maîtres des esclaves n'en avertissent pas les juges, ils seront passibles d'une amende.

Art. 13. Les esclaves, achetés avant la publication des édits, qui seraient devenus soldats avec l'autorisation de leurs maîtres et du Gouvernement, et qui auraient fait partie, comme hommes d'armes, une fois ou deux d'expéditions et auraient pris part à une bataille, ne seront plus appelés esclaves et seront libérés.

Art. 14. Si les esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits ont été libérés par leurs maîtres, de leur vivant, pour les bons services qu'ils auraient rendus, leurs enfants seront considérés également comme affranchis. Une fois que leurs pères et leurs mères sont libérés, les enfants ne devront plus être réduits à l'esclavage.

Art. 15. Les juges nommés *ad hoc*, ainsi que les Gouverneurs des provinces, devront faire le recensement et l'inscription nominative, dans un registre, des esclaves que les paysans de l'intérieur auraient mariés entre eux avant la publication des édits, et faire le nécessaire pour les faire vivre dans la maison de leurs maîtres. Si parmi ces esclaves, l'un venait à mourir, les maîtres devront en aviser de suite les juges et le faire inscrire. S'ils n'avisent pas les juges de ce décès, ils seront punis de la même peine que les ravisseurs des esclaves.

Art. 16. Les enfants qui naîtront à l'avenir de l'union des esclaves achetés avant la publication des édits deviendront libres à partir du moment de leur naissance. Toutefois, si on laissait partir ces enfants suivant leur bon plaisir avant qu'ils aient atteint l'âge de 15 ans, ils pourraient devenir malheureux, ils resteront avec leur parents dans la maison de leurs maîtres pendant ces quinze années et seront instruits, nourris, habillés et surveillés par leurs maîtres, qui sont autorisés à les élever.

Art. 17. Les esclaves, achetés avant la publication des édits, qui dans une guerre ou dans d'autres circonstances, auraient sauvé leurs maîtres d'un péril ou d'un grave accident, auront le droit d'être libérés.

Art. 18. Il est permis aux enfants nés de femmes esclaves, achetées avant la publication des édits, et d'hommes libres d'être libérés.

Art. 19. Si les esclaves, achetés avant la publication des édits, devenaient les favoris de leurs patronnes qui n'ont pas de mari, ou des filles de celles-ci, il leur est permis d'être libérés.

Art. 20. Les maîtres d'esclaves qui, avant la publication des édits, auraient achetés et cédés des esclaves à d'autres personnes ne peuvent pas les reprendre sous prétexte qu'ils étaient leurs esclaves.

Dispositions relatives aux Esclaves libérés.

Art. 21. Les juges nommés à cet effet sont autorisés à délivrer aux esclaves libérés suivant les stipulations du présent règlement et après leur avoir demandé leur nom, leur pays et leur tribu, un certificat de libération. Ils remettront ces esclaves libérés aux différents Gouverneurs des provinces, qui leur en donneront décharge.

Art. 22. La formule du certificat d'affranchissement à remettre aux esclaves libérés, doit être libellée comme ci-dessous :

Nom :
Nom du père :
Nom de son pays :
Nom de la province :
Nom de son maître :
Emploi de son maître :
Chef de son maître :

étant libéré est autorisé à vivre à sa volonté où il voudra. Le motif de sa libération est inscrit au registre : folio :

Pays où il a été libéré :
Mois de sa libération :
Année :

Sceau du Gouvernement :

Signature du juge :

Signature du secrétaire :

Art. 23. Les Gouverneurs des provinces sont autorisés, après les avoir reçus des mains des juges, à rapatrier et à rendre à leurs parents et à leurs tribus les esclaves libérés en vertu du présent règlement.

Art. 24. Les esclaves libérés en vertu des clauses du présent règlement et rapatriés dans leur pays sont autorisés à être exempts d'impôts pendant une période de sept ans, conformément aux dispositions des édits, afin de leur permettre de travailler et de se suffire à eux-mêmes.

Art. 25. Si les esclaves, libérés suivant les clauses du présent règlement, ne désirent pas retourner dans leur pays et auprès de leurs familles, ils sont autorisés, après avoir reçu le certificat de libération, à vivre où ils voudront, engagés moyennant un salaire.

Art. 26. Si les esclaves libérés en vertu du présent règlement sont âgés de plus de 7 ans et de moins de 20 ans, ils sont autorisés à entrer à l'école spéciale fondée par le Gouvernement pour eux et à apprendre à lire et à écrire. Jusqu'à l'achèvement de leurs études de lecture et d'écriture c'est le Gouvernement qui supportera les frais.

Art. 27. Le Gouvernement fera examiner l'intelligence et la capacité des esclaves qui, ayant été libérés conformément aux dispositions du présent règlement, auront appris à lire et à écrire. Il enverra à l'école des métiers ceux qui sont capables d'apprendre les travaux manuels; à l'école militaire ceux qui sont capables de devenir militaires; à l'école des langues étrangères ceux qui sont capables d'apprendre les langues étrangères; au séminaire ceux qui sont capables de devenir ecclésiastiques.

28. S'il est dit que le Gouvernement enverra à l'école les esclaves libérés, conformément aux stipulations du présent règlement, ce ne sera que jusqu'au jour où ils auront appris à lire et à écrire et jusqu'au moment où ils auront atteint l'âge de 20 ans. A partir de cet âge ils vivront suivant leur désir et ne seront sous aucun prétexte retenus par force.

Art. 29. Si les esclaves libérés, conformément aux termes du présent règlement, sont reconnus capables par leur intelligence et leur travail, ils seront autorisés à occuper un emploi gouvernemental et à avoir des grades.

Art. 30. Si les esclaves libérés conformément aux termes du présent règlement se trouvent pratiquant le vol et le brigandage, ils seront arrêtés et punis de la même peine que les brigands et les voleurs. Il est formellement défendu de prétendre qu'ils doivent retourner à leur ancien état d'esclavage parce qu'ils sont devenus voleurs ou brigands.

Peines à appliquer aux Trafiquants d'Esclaves.

Art. 31. Si, après la publication des édits relatifs à l'interdiction du trafic d'esclavage en Éthiopie il se trouvait des personnes se livrant à la vente et à l'achat d'esclaves, elles paieront 500 thalers d'amendes et seront condamnées à dix ans de prison pour la première fois; si elles n'ont pas de quoi payer, la peine sera portée à quinze ans d'emprisonnement. En cas de récidive, elles seront condamnées à l'emprisonnement à perpétuité.

Art. 32. Toute personne qui ayant rencontré en quelque endroit que ce soit des esclaves, libérés conformément aux termes du présent règlement, les tromperait par de fausses promesses ou les séduirait pour en faire des esclaves, paiera une amende de 500 thalers, si elle possède de l'argent, et sera condamnée à cinq ans de prison. En cas de récidive, elle sera enchaînée pendant toute la durée de sa vie.

Art. 33. Toute personne qui aura donné le nom d'esclaves à des esclaves libérés conformément aux termes du présent règlement et dûment munis de l'acte de libération sera considérée comme contravenant aux édits et paiera une amende de 50 thalers.

Art. 34. Si, après la publication, des édits il se trouvait des esclaves achetés et qui ayant été arrêtés comparaitraient devant les juges, auxquels ils déclareraient avoir été acheté à tel ou tel endroit, ou si l'acheteur, ayant été arrêté avait avoué les avoir achetés à tel ou tel endroit, le Gouverneur de la province, le chef de la tribu et le petit chef du village dans le pays desquels le trafic a eu lieu seront considérés comme ayant négligé d'appliquer les dispositions des édits et seront, en conséquence, condamnés, pour n'avoir pas respecté les dispositions des édits et n'avoir pas empêché le trafic des esclaves dans leur pays, à payer :

Le Gouverneur : 300 thalers ;
Le chef de la tribu : 200 thalers ;
Le chef du village : 100 thalers ;

et cela pour la première fois.

Pour la seconde fois, ils seront condamnés à payer :

Le Gouverneur : 500 thalers ;
Le chef de la tribu : 300 thalers ;
Le chef du village : 200 thalers, d'amende.

Pour la troisième fois : le Gouverneur sera destitué de ses fonctions ; le chef de la tribu aura ses propriétés confisquées ; et le chef du village sera dépouillé des privilèges attachés à ses fonctions.

Art. 35. Les juges nommés à cet effet sont tenus de porter, par écrit, à la connaissance du Ministre de l'Intérieur, le montant des amendes. De son côté, le Ministre de l'Intérieur aura le devoir de réclamer et de se faire remettre ces sommes par chaque Gouverneur de province, par chaque chef de tribu et par chaque chef de village pour en faire la remise au Ministre des Finances. Si le Ministre de l'Intérieur négligeait de faire payer aux Gouverneurs des provinces le montant de ces amendes fixées, il paiera le double de ces amendes suivant le témoignage des livres des juges. Le Ministre des Finances gardera le montant de ces amendes en dépôt spécial et il ne sera employé à d'autres usages qu'à l'habillement, à la nourriture et aux frais d'école des esclaves libérés.

Art. 36. Toute personne qui serait surprise en flagrant délit de vente ou d'achat d'esclave après la publication des édits, sera remise par les juges au gouverneur de la prison contre décharge et c'est par l'entremise du gouverneur de la prison que la peine d'emprisonnement doit être exécutée.

Art. 37. Les juges nommés pour assurer la liberté des esclaves remettront au gouverneur de la prison la personne qui, après la publication des édits, se serait livrée au trafic d'esclaves, et feront connaître par écrit à ce même gouverneur le nombre d'années pendant lesquelles elle doit être enchaînée ainsi que l'année, le mois et le jour où elle doit être mise en liberté.

Dispositions relatives aux Juges nommés pour assurer la Liberté des Esclaves.

Art. 38. Le Gouvernement nommera deux juges pour la ville d'Addis-Ababa et deux pour chaque province, lesquels sont chargés d'assurer la liberté des esclaves. Pour la ville d'Addis-Ababa c'est le Gouvernement qui désignera les juges qui doivent siéger ; quant aux juges qui siégeront dans les provinces, ils seront choisis par les Gouverneurs, qui ne les nommeront qu'après avoir préalablement avisé le Gouvernement de leur choix.

Art. 39. Pour ces juges qui seront nommés à Addis-Ababa, le Gouvernement mettra à leur disposition un local où ils s'installeront pour questionner les esclaves qui sous n'importe quels prétextes seraient arrêtés et amenés et pour rendre leur sentence. Quant à ceux qui seront nommés dans les provinces, les Gouverneurs du pays mettront à leur disposition un local. En attendant que les esclaves arrêtés et amenés soient interrogés, le Gouvernement leur donnera un logement et de la nourriture. Quant aux esclaves arrêtés et amenés dans les provinces, ils seront nourris et logés par les Gouverneurs en attendant que les juges les questionnent.

Art. 40. Le Gouvernement fournira aux juges d'Addis-Ababa le nombre de gardiens nécessaires pour garder les esclaves arrêtés et amenés pour différents motifs jusqu'à ce qu'ils soient questionnés et leur affaire terminée ; dans les provinces, ce sont les Gouverneurs qui fourniront les gardiens. Si les esclaves s'évadaient avant que leur cas soit examiné et tranché, les gardiens en seront responsables.

Art. 41. S'il se produit un différend entre les maîtres et les esclaves touchant la liberté des esclaves, le cas sera porté devant les juges désignés à cet effet et siégeant dans un local spécial. Si les deux partis ne se mettaient pas d'accord et s'il y avait lieu de recourir à l'appel, la question sera tranchée par une commission nommée par le Gouvernement pour Addis-Ababa. Mais cet appel ne devra en aucun cas être présenté aux juges des tribunaux. Dans les provinces la sentence en appel sera rendue par une commission désignée par le Gouverneur, et en aucune façon la question ne sera portée devant les juges du tribunal du Gouverneur.

Le Ministre de l'Intérieur veillera à la bonne exécution des édits promulgués sur la liberté des esclaves ; il n'aura aucun droit de s'immiscer dans les jugements.

Art. 42. Les juges nommés pour veiller à la liberté des esclaves recevront du Gouvernement un cachet à l'effigie du lion ne devant servir qu'à être apposé sur les certificats donnant la liberté aux esclaves et sur les convocations à être adressées aux accusés. Ce cachet restera entre les mains du secrétaire. Chaque fois que ce cachet sera apposé, les juges devront contresigner. Si, à côté du cachet, ne figurent pas les signatures des juges, le cachet n'est pas valable.

Art. 43. Le Ministre de l'Intérieur nomme une personne chargée d'examiner et de contrôler, tous les six mois, tout ce que font les juges nommés pour la surveillance de la liberté des esclaves. Ce contrôleur, après s'être rendu compte des actes des juges, fera connaître par écrit au Ministre de l'Intérieur toutes les observations que lui suggérera

son enquête. Après quoi, le Ministre de l'Intérieur fera immédiatement connaître l'état des choses au Gouvernement.

Art. 44. Les juges nommés pour veiller à la liberté des esclaves devront faire connaître, tous les mois par un rapport succinct, au Ministre de l'Intérieur, le nombre des esclaves libérés, ainsi que les motifs de leur libération. Le Ministre de l'Intérieur, après l'avoir communiqué au Gouvernement, le fera publier dans les journaux.

Art. 45. Ce règlement pourra être modifié à l'avenir suivant les nécessités.

Addis-Ababa, le 22 Magabit 1916, de l'an de grâce (31 mars 1924).

[E 4168/697/1]

No. 24.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 42.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 18, 1924.

RAS TAFFARI with the members of his mission left here yesterday. They will embark on a French mail steamer at Jibuti, and go to Port Said, whence a special train will take them to Jerusalem, arriving there on Abyssinian Good Friday. The party will return to Egypt on the 30th April, and spend a few days in Cairo as the guests of King Fuad. They will proceed, via Alexandria and Marseilles, to Paris, and thence to Brussels, Rome and London, returning to Paris for the 14th July, the French Government having made a point of their presence at the festivities associated with that anniversary. Proposals to visit Berlin, America, and Geneva have not yet taken definite shape.

His highness is accompanied by Ras Hailu, to whom I have referred in a separate despatch; by Ras Nado, Governor of Gorei, who was in Europe and America with the mission of 1919, and in Geneva last year; by Ras Guksa Aria, Governor of Tigre; by Ras Seyum, the disgraced former Governor of that province, and a grandson of the Emperor John; by Dejazmatch Gabre Sillassie, the evil and influential counsellor of the Empress and, for this occasion, Her Majesty's official spy; by Dejazmatch Haile Sillassie, an elderly and insignificant uncle of Ras Tafari, and titular Governor of an eastern province; and by Belata (Doctor) Heroui, a theologian, late Mayor of Addis Ababa, who was with Ras Nado's mission in 1919. Four subordinate Abyssinian officers, two Armenian secretaries, and M. Zervos, a Greek physician, together with a dozen servants, complete the party. At the last moment, the French legal adviser, M. de Bellefonds, was instructed to accompany the mission. I am told that he does so unofficially, but I have not yet ascertained what this implies, or whether it is intended that he should go with Ras Tafari to capitals other than Paris. I have nothing against M. de Bellefonds, but I consider that his presence in London with the mission in any capacity would be undesirable and out of place, and I should suggest, if you agree, that steps should be taken in time to make this clear. The Italian Chargé d'Affaires shares my view of this matter as regards Rome, and will no doubt so inform his Government.

For weeks past Ras Tafari's thoughts have centred on this journey, and his energies have been devoted to its most trivial details. It is not the political aspects of his mission that have occupied him. He is concerned to know whether he will be accommodated in royal palaces, whether heads of State will meet him at the station, and what clothes he ought to wear and when. He has had no time for affairs of State. He omitted to settle some outstanding matters with which I had earnestly begged him to deal before leaving, and the same complaint is made by other Legations. In the excitement of the moment, His Highness forgot to take leave of the foreign representatives, and he has failed also to inform us who will fill his office during his absence. I do not know whether fault has been found by his own people, but in the Legations and foreign community all this has brought Ras Tafari no credit. There has been occasion for criticism, and ground for humorous comment, and his character as a sensible man and a serious statesman has suffered.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

[E 4259/505/1]

No. 25.

Mr. Russell to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 15.)

(No. 45.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, April 28, 1924.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 54 of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the Abyssinian Government continue to evade signature of the contract with the Belgian company for the institution of a state monopoly of alcohol. Ras Tafari having now left the country, the matter may be regarded as temporarily in suspense. M. Gérard informs me that the Belgian Government will take the opportunity of the Ras's visit to Brussels to discuss the matter directly with his Highness.

The whole matter has been typical of the methods of the Abyssinian Government. It was perfectly open to them to negative the proposed enterprise from the outset, and, in that case, no more need have been heard of it. But in the early stages of any matter, the Abyssinian Government are led by indolence to prefer the line of least resistance; they allow a discussion to be opened without regard to the concrete proposals which necessarily follow, until a point is reached when a conclusion is only avoidable by procrastination and deceit. The Belgian Minister, of whom so much was made on his arrival here, is literally furious at the way he has been treated, and, if his reports carry weight in Brussels, we may take it that Abyssinia has not gained a new friend in Belgium. M. Gérard is, incidentally, much incensed at the part played in this matter by the French Legation, which he believes, rightly or wrongly, to have hindered the conclusion of the contract.

It is perhaps worth noting that should coming events in Abyssinia occasion any grouping of the Powers here represented, Belgium would not, as far as can be foreseen, take her place by the side of France.

I have, &c.

CLAUD RUSSELL.

[E 4499/473/1]

No. 26.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 23.)

(No. 1131.)

Sir,

Paris, May 22, 1924.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1116 of the 19th May, I have the honour to inform you that the "Journal des Débats" of the 19th May publishes an article regarding the Jibuti-Addis Ababa Railway.

Of all the great Powers, it is France, the writer declares, which has shown the greatest consideration towards the Abyssinian Government, and it is not merely a coincidence that the Prince Regent is to return to Paris once again after visiting Great Britain and Italy.

Between 1896 and 1917 the French built a railway nearly 800 kilom. long which has transformed the colony of Jibuti into the gate of Abyssinia. Two-thirds of Abyssinian export trade makes use of this route; such a result was not obtained without great sacrifice. Construction of the railway absorbed nearly 120 million francs. The French Government, which since the failure of the first company in 1908 has paid the interest on the capital (in the event of the traffic receipts proving insufficient), expended not less than 3 million francs in the year 1923. It is probable that in 1924 only a very small sum will be demanded from the French Government, but it is only after a prolonged period that this fortunate result has been attained.

The article states that the time has now come when the advantages which France at present enjoys should be consolidated and regularised. At first sight it might appear that French interests were well protected. The Anglo-Franco-Italian Convention of the 13th December, 1906, had established an agreement as regards railways between the three Powers; the Jibuti-Addis Ababa Railway was acknowledged as belonging to the French sphere of influence under the condition that foreign traffic should be subjected to the same treatment as French goods both on the railway and at the harbour of Jibuti. Great Britain was authorised to construct a railway between Addis Ababa and the White Nile, and at the same time might carry the Cape-to-Cairo Railway across to Abyssinian territory. Italy was accorded the right of establishing railway communication between Eritrea and Italian Somaliland by a railway line

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passing to the west of Addis Ababa. It is further laid down that no other lines should be built in competition, but, in spite of these provisions, it would be a mistake if France were to remain content.

Abyssinia is once again a centre of very lively international rivalry. The Italian Government has just sent back to Addis Ababa Count Colli, the most expert of her diplomatists in Abyssinian matters. Great Britain is no longer satisfied with the guarantees and advantages which she obtained by the Anglo-Abyssinian Treaty of 1902, whereby Abyssinia was prohibited from undertaking any operations which might injure the flow of water towards the Sobat Nile, Lake Tsana and the Blue Nile. Great Britain is now claiming to construct dams, more particularly at the end of Lake Tsana, and she is coming to regard Western Abyssinia more and more as the reservoir of the Soudan, where her power is now concentrated since her loss of Egypt. Further, it must not be forgotten that the Abyssinian Government has never recognised the Anglo-Franco-Italian Treaty of 1906.

For the greater part of its length, the French railway makes use of Abyssinian territory, and the constant support of the Abyssinian Government is therefore indispensable to it. No efforts must be spared to ensure that Abyssinia regards the French railway as her own railway, and the port of Jibuti as her own port. Any other alternative would be imprudent.

The suggestion is being made that a free zone might be set up at Jibuti. A Franco-Ethiopian company would be entrusted with this administration. In this way the fiscal receipts of the colony would be necessarily diminished, since neither export taxes nor taxes on consumption would be levied in the free zone. It would then be necessary for the Abyssinian Government and the administering company to make up this deficit, for Jibuti, deprived of such resources, would be incapable of fulfilling the rôle assigned to it. Such plans have nothing definite or fixed about them; their principal merit lies in showing the direction in which France ought to work.

As already reported, special reference was made to the Addis Ababa Railway by M. Millerand in his speech at the banquet given in honour of Ras Tafari, and it is evident that considerable importance is attached by the French to the development of this railway and of the port of Jibuti.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[E 4596/697/1]

No. 27.

Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 327.)

Sir,

Cairo, May 18, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to refer to my telegram No. 119 of the 1st instant, in which I promised, in accordance with the instructions contained in your telegram No. 59, to furnish you with an account of Ras Tafari's visit to this country.

2. On his arrival at Suez, where he disembarked on the 24th April, His Highness was ceremonially received by the Grand Chamberlain, representing King Fuad; Hassan Anis Pasha, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, representing the Egyptian Government; Yussuf Soliman Pasha, a former Minister of Finance and Agriculture, at the head of a delegation of Coptic notables; and the consuls of France and Italy.

3. Though Ras Tafari's original intention, as reported to me, had been to disembark at Port Said, I had taken the precaution of warning Mr. Rapp, vice-consul at Suez, of the possibility of his changing his mind. He too was, therefore, present.

4. Ras Tafari brought a suite numbering in all twenty-seven, and, accompanied by Zulficar Pasha and Anis Pasha, proceeded in a launch lent by the Suez Canal Company to Ismailia. He there took a *train de luxe*—placed at his disposal by the Egyptian Government throughout his stay in this country—to Kantara, where he changed on to the Kantara-Rafa line for Jerusalem.

5. In my telegram No. 119 I alluded to certain alleged misunderstandings with the Palestine Government authorities at Kantara. These reports first reached me informally through King Fuad, who told his British aide-de-camp (Colonel Castle-Smith) that he considered that it would be helpful to me to know them. I subsequently ascertained that they were the subject of general discussion both in Egyptian circles and among the Diplomatic Corps. The first was to the effect that one of the Ras's suite had been detained and incarcerated at Kantara for his failure to produce his passport.

This, I proved by immediate reference to Sir H. Samuel, was entirely incorrect, the man in question being an obscure Abyssinian destitute who had tried to attach himself to the party. The second report already communicated in my telegram No. 120, namely, that the Ras was forced to pay for his special train to Jerusalem in advance, is dealt with later in this despatch.

6. His Imperial Highness returned from Palestine to Port Said on the 1st May, and having spent the night there incognito travelled to Cairo the following day. He was seen off at the station at Port Said without ceremony by the local authorities of the Egyptian Government and by the consuls, including Mr. Footman. On his arrival in Cairo, he was accorded an imposing official reception. The Grand Chamberlain and most of the Egyptian Ministers and Under-Secretaries of State were in attendance at the station. I went with the whole of my staff, and the French and Italian Ministers and their staffs were also present, together with a large number of the Coptic community. A large guard of honour of Egyptian infantry, with a band, was drawn up on the platform and was inspected by the Ras.

7. The following morning I called on His Imperial Highness at Shepherd's Hotel, where he was staying in the royal suite, and, after an exchange of compliments, I delivered him the message contained in your telegram No. 80, regarding Mr. Russell's absence on the occasion of his departure from Addis Ababa. As I have already reported in my telegrams Nos. 122 and 123, the Ras listened to me with politeness and close attention, but was clearly not satisfied with my explanation. He did not, however, press the point and seemed much pleased at my invitation—telegraphed to him before his arrival in Cairo—to dine at the Residency.

8. With reference to the concluding paragraph of your telegram No. 80, the Ras was inconclusive in regard to the date of his visit to England. He seemed to wish to adhere to his plan to arrive on the 1st July; but when I argued strongly against this, he promised to reconsider the matter. I regret, however, that I was unable to elicit a definite reply from him before he left. His arrangements are in the hands of one or two of his staff, who are as bewildered as they are incompetent; and it will be necessary to bring influence to bear on him again shortly before the time of his arrival in the United Kingdom. I would, however, venture to warn you that His Imperial Highness gave me the strong impression that he is extremely sensitive about points of this nature.

9. Later in the day His Imperial Highness was received in audience by King Fuad.

10. On the night of the 4th May I gave an official dinner party to His Imperial Highness and eleven of his suite, including Ras Hailu, Ras Siyoum and Ras Rado. On his arrival, Ras Tafari presented Lady Allenby and myself with a large silk rug and some richly decorated Abyssinian saddlery. I invited to dinner to meet the Ras only members of the British colony, and after dinner I held a reception, also exclusively British, in the garden, which had been specially illuminated, and in which I had had erected an elaborate covered dais for the Abyssinian party. A brass band and Scottish pipers had been engaged to play alternately. Ras Tafari expressed himself especially pleased with the latter. At the end of the reception I took His Imperial Highness personally by car direct to the station, my staff doing similarly with the rest of his suite. He left by special train at about 11 P.M. for Luxor.

11. The party spent two days at Luxor, and on their return on the 7th May I paid an official call on Ras Tafari in order to offer him a suitable apology for the fact that he had been forced to pay in advance at Kantara for his special train to Jerusalem. I ascribed this as due to a misunderstanding. His Imperial Highness replied that, while he much appreciated His Majesty's Government's message, he considered the incident as closed. I was, however, left in uncertainty whether he would be prepared to accept the money or not, and thought it best to send one of my staff with a cheque to his private secretary next day, with instructions to ascertain discreetly how matters stood. His Imperial Highness, to whom the matter was referred, sent a polite message to the effect that he could not see his way to accept the money, repeating that he regarded the whole incident as passed.

12. On the afternoon of the 7th May Ras Tafari was entertained to tea at the French Legation. The Italian Minister, I should add, was unable, in spite of repeated efforts, to get the Ras to his Legation at all, in view of the fulness of his programme. In the evening of the 7th May King Fuad gave a State banquet in honour of the Ras, to which I and part of my staff were invited, together with members of the Diplomatic Corps and various notables.

13. In the afternoon of the 8th May Zaghlul Pasha gave a tea party at the Zoological Gardens, to which the Ministers, Under-Secretaries of State, I and my whole staff and the Diplomatic Corps were invited. After a tour of the gardens, His Imperial

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Highness left for the station, where he received an official send-off on lines similar to those of the reception arranged for him on arrival as described above.

14. During their stay the Abyssinian party were shown the places of interest in Cairo, and they were conducted to inspect the Delta barrage, in which Ras Tafari is reported to have evinced special interest.

15. In Alexandria Ras Tafari paid a visit to Victoria College, where several Abyssinian boys have been educated. Before departure for Marseilles he was entertained to luncheon by the Governor of Alexandria.

16. No pains were spared by the Egyptian Government to give His Imperial Highness a royal welcome, and he was the recipient of much attention from all quarters.

17. I should add that Ras Tafari expressed himself, both to me and to others, much gratified by the warmth of his reception at the Residency; and I found him agreeable, intelligent and appreciative of courtesy. He is a person of strikingly refined appearance. I think that he left for France, as far as His Majesty's Government is concerned, in a contented frame of mind. Whether, however, his projected tour in Europe will make him more amenable to diplomatic influence than before, I am disposed, I must confess, greatly to doubt. I see that he has been received in state at Paris, being met personally by M. Millerand and M. Poincaré, and that he has been installed in the royal apartments at the Quai d'Orsay. From the point of view of our desiderata, the Abyssinian characteristics, which I gather to be vanity and sensitiveness side by side with unreliability and lack of method in affairs, need, I should imagine, considerable correction; and I cannot but think that it would have been better if the Allies, instead of encouraging the former defects in costly competition with one another, had been able to agree in their own mutual interests to combine to remedy the latter with a firm hand.

I have, &c.

ALLENBY, F.M.,

High Commissioner.

[E 4631/697/1]

No. 28.

Sir G. Grahame to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 458.)

Sir,

Brussels, May 26, 1924.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 452 of the 23rd May relative to the visit of the Regent and Heir Apparent of Abyssinia to Brussels, I have the honour to state that the Ras Tafari arrived at Brussels from Paris at 6 o'clock on the evening of the 22nd instant. His Highness was met at the station by the King of the Belgians and the Duke of Brabant.

The principal persons in His Highness's suite were Ras Hailu, Ras Seyum, former Governor of the Tigre, Ras Guksa Aria, present Governor of that province, and Ras Nado, Governor of Gorei.

The Ras Tafari proceeded before dinner to the tomb of the "Unknown Soldier," where he deposited a metal wreath of laurels, set between two large ivory tusks and surmounted by the Ethiopian crown.

In the evening the King of the Belgians gave a banquet in his guest's honour at the palace. The text of His Majesty's speech and of the Ras's reply are enclosed herein. Both made reference to the fact that Belgium had supported Abyssinia's successful candidature for admission to the League of Nations last year.

On the morning of the 23rd instant Ras Tafari visited the military school, accompanied by the Duke of Brabant. There was a review of the cadets, gymnastic and riding displays, &c.

The Ras was entertained at luncheon by M. Hymans, Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Duke of Brabant, M. Theunis, President of the Council, and a number of Ministers and important persons in Belgian public life, including some prominent bankers, were present.

In the afternoon the Ras paid a visit to the Horse Show, accompanied by the King and the Queen, proceeding there in open State carriages. There followed a private visit to the Town Hall.

In the evening His Highness gave a gala dinner in some public rooms here, at which were present the King, the Duke of Brabant, the President of the Council, the

Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Ministers of Public Works and Agriculture, Railways and others.

His Highness left at 7.20 the following morning for a day's visit to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg.

The persons attached to the Ras during his visit to Belgium were Lieutenant-General Count Greindl and M. le Maire de Warzée, a member of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, having the rank of Minister.

I have, &c.

GEORGE GRAHAME.

Enclosure in No. 28.

Extract from the "Soir" of May 24, 1924.

LE DISCOURS DU ROI.

LE Roi Albert a prononcé un discours, disant notamment :

"Monseigneur,

"Nous sommes très sensibles à la visite que votre Altesse impériale a tenu à nous faire, et la Belgique est heureuse de saluer dans sa capitale le Prince Régent, représentant d'une illustre famille qui règne sur un des plus anciens empires du monde.

"Nous voyons dans la présence de votre Altesse impériale parmi nous un précieux témoignage de ses sentiments d'amitié à notre égard.

"La Belgique, qui n'a d'autre ambition que de concourir, par les voies fécondes des œuvres de paix, au développement moral et économique de l'humanité, attache un grand prix aux sentiments amicaux de l'Éthiopie, avec laquelle elle désire multiplier des relations également fructueuses pour les deux pays.

"La Belgique s'est réjouie de concourir efficacement à l'adhésion de l'Éthiopie dans la Société des Nations.

"Votre Altesse impériale voudra bien être, auprès de Sa Majesté l'Impératrice Zéodita, souveraine honorée, appartenant à une dynastie dont l'origine remonte jusqu'au grand Roi Salomon, l'interprète de nos respectueux hommages et des vœux que mon Gouvernement et moi nous formons pour la gloire de son règne, pour le bonheur et la prospérité de votre Empire."

LA RÉPONSE DU PRINCE.

En réponse au toast du Roi Albert, le Prince Régent d'Éthiopie a prononcé, dans sa langue maternelle, un discours, dont l'interprète qui l'accompagne a ensuite donné la traduction ci-après :

"Sire,

"L'aimable invitation que votre Majesté a bien voulu m'adresser à venir visiter votre glorieux et cher pays, servira à fortifier l'amitié déjà existante entre la Belgique et l'Éthiopie; cette invitation ne sera jamais oubliée ni par moi ni par le peuple éthiopien.

"L'accueil amical que votre Majesté a bien voulu me réserver dans sa belle capitale nous a vivement touchés et a comblé de joie mon cœur et ceux des dignitaires qui m'accompagnent; nous en garderons un souvenir ineffaçable.

"J'ai appris en Éthiopie que votre Majesté était animée de sentiments de grande amitié envers mon pays, et, depuis lors, j'avais un grand désir de venir rendre visite à votre Majesté.

"Sire,

"Quoique l'Éthiopie remonte à la plus haute antiquité, si elle a retardé son progrès, ce n'est pas par négligence, mais surtout à la suite de guerres continuelles et sanglantes qu'elle a dû livrer pour la défense de son indépendance et de sa religion, contre des païens et des musulmans.

"Aujourd'hui, j'ai le plaisir de déclarer à votre Majesté que des relations empreintes de la plus grande amitié se sont établies entre l'Éthiopie et les Puissances européennes. Elles prouvent amplement que notre pays a la ferme volonté de développer sa culture intellectuelle. La Belgique a bien voulu nous y

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aider l'an dernier en appuyant notre demande d'admission à la Société des Nations où nous suivrons la voie du progrès, tout en défendant nos droits et nos intérêts et tout en donnant satisfaction aux amis qui nous ont aidés.

"Je prie Dieu qu'il veuille bien accorder à votre Majesté une bonne santé et une longue vie, du bonheur et de la paix pour votre peuple et pour votre pays. Je lève mon verre à la santé de votre Majesté, à Sa Majesté la Reine, à la Famille royale, ainsi qu'à la santé de Sa Majesté l'Impératrice Zéodita et à la prospérité des peuples belge et éthiopien."

[E 4632/697/1]

No. 29.

Sir G. Grahame to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 459.)

Sir,

Brussels, May 26, 1924.

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch of to-day's date relative to the visit to Belgium of the Regent and Heir Apparent of Abyssinia, I have the honour to state that Ras Tafari left Brussels by train at 7.20 A.M. on Saturday, the 24th instant, for Luxembourg. The King of the Belgians and the Duke of Brabant were present at the station to bid him farewell, and His Highness was accompanied in the train by the Comte d'Ansembourg, Chargé d'Affaires of Luxembourg at Brussels, and Senator Le Jeune, who has been specially designated by the Government to accompany His Highness on his visit to other towns in Belgium following the visit to Luxembourg.

His Highness was met at Luxembourg station by the Prince of Luxembourg, members of the Government, High Court officials and the Town Council. A luncheon was given at the Palace in his honour, to which the foreign diplomatic representatives accredited to and resident in Luxembourg were invited, as were also the members of the Government, the Presidents of the Chamber, of the Council of State and of the High Court, and the Burgomaster of Luxembourg.

The Grand Duchess could not receive Ras Tafari, having given birth to a Princess a few days before the visit.

After lunch a reception was held, at which the Burgomaster of Luxembourg read an address of welcome, to which Ras Tafari replied in suitable terms.

His Highness left again at 5 o'clock for Antwerp.

I have, &c.

GEORGE GRAHAME.

[E 4758/697/1]

No. 30.

Sir G. Grahame to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 476.)

Sir,

Brussels, May 30, 1924.

WITH reference to my despatches No. 447 of the 22nd instant and Nos. 458 and 459 of the 26th instant relative to the visits of the Regent and Heir Apparent of Abyssinia to Brussels and Luxembourg, I have the honour to state that Ras Tafari left Brussels yesterday evening for Paris at the conclusion of a tour of the principal towns of Belgium, the programme of which was outlined in my first-mentioned despatch.

On leaving Luxembourg on the afternoon of the 24th instant Ras Tafari and his suite proceeded direct to Antwerp, where he was received at the station by the Governor of the province and the Burgomaster of Antwerp. He resided at the house of Senator Albert Le Jeune, who has recently returned from Abyssinia and seems to have taken a leading part in arranging the tour of Ras Tafari, probably not from purely disinterested motives.

On Sunday morning, the 25th instant, His Highness visited the Town Hall, and then, accompanied by M. Le Jeune, visited the docks. An official luncheon was given in his honour by the Governor of the province, and afterwards the Zoological Gardens were visited. In the evening M. Le Jeune gave a banquet in honour of his guest.

On Monday, the 26th instant, Ras Tafari proceeded to Ghent via Ninove and was received at 1 o'clock at the Town Hall by the burgomaster and by the Governor of the province, and the civil and military authorities were presented to him. There followed a banquet at which the burgomaster made a speech of welcome, to which His Highness

replied. In the afternoon various industrial establishments and the wharves were visited. In the evening a reception was given in the Provincial Government building.

On Tuesday, the 27th instant, His Highness proceeded to Liège, where he was met by the Governor of the province, the burgomaster and other leading persons of the city. The "Fabrique nationale d'Armes de Guerre" at Herstal was then visited, and a luncheon was given to him at the official residence of the Governor of the province. In the afternoon the citadel of Liège and the fort of Loncin were visited, and also a number of factories. At the Cockerill Arms Factory His Highness was presented with a 47-mm. field gun produced there. In the evening there was an official dinner in His Highness's honour at the Town Hall; the usual speeches were made.

On Wednesday morning, the 28th instant, His Highness arrived at Charleroi and was received by the chairman and the members of the board of the "Charbonnage de Maurage" and the Director of Mines. The coal-mine and its various installations were then visited, and also the company's elaborate workmen's welfare arrangements. A miner's lamp of the latest design was presented to His Highness. After luncheon Ras Tafari left for Brussels by motor, where on arrival he visited the Banque de Bruxelles, accompanied by the director of that institution. In the evening a dinner was given in his honour by the governor of the bank, at which a silver bowl was presented to His Highness. There were present the members of the board of the "Plantation d'Abyssinie" and of the "Société générale de Culture," a Belgian cultural and patriotic institution with activities in Abyssinia.

On Thursday morning, the 29th instant, His Highness, accompanied by Senator Le Jeune and M. le Maire de Warzée, the Foreign Office official attached to him, visited the Colonial Museum at Tervueren, in the environs of Brussels. He was received there by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Colonies representing the Minister. His Highness, after lunching at Groenendael in the Forêt de Soignes, proceeded to the Tour of Genappe, where he was received by Senator Berger, who made a speech of welcome, referring to the local horse and cattle breeding establishments. He was afterwards present at a show of the finest specimens of horses, bulls, &c. His Highness then returned to Brussels, stopping at the Belle Alliance Farm at Waterloo and visiting the battlefield under the guidance of Lieutenant-General Dufour.

During his second and unofficial visit to Brussels Ras Tafari and his suite stayed at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which is not used as a residence by the present Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In an interview granted to the press before leaving, His Highness is reported to have stated that his reception in Belgium had been more cordial than in any of the other countries so far visited. Asked as to his plans, His Highness stated that he was going to visit Italy and England, and probably Switzerland, and would return to Abyssinia at the end of August. On passing the frontier His Highness addressed the following telegram to the King of the Belgians:—

"Au moment de quitter la Belgique, j'envoie à votre Majesté et à Sa Majesté la Reine l'expression de ma profonde gratitude pour l'accueil que j'ai reçu partout et dont je garderai un inoubliable souvenir."

The tour in Belgium of Ras Tafari and the Abyssinian chiefs accompanying him provided opportunities for organising functions and manifestations so dear to Belgians, especially provincial Belgians. It is clear that the Belgian bankers, industrialists and concession hunters, &c., are turning their thoughts to Abyssinia as a likely field for future profitable operations.

I have, &c.

GEORGE GRAHAME.

[E 5407/697/1]

No. 31.

Sir R. Graham to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 566.)

Sir,

Rome, June 20, 1924.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 549 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to report that Ras Tafari, the Regent of Ethiopia, arrived in Rome on an official visit to His Majesty the King of Italy on the 18th instant.

The Ras, who had travelled in the Royal train from the frontier, was met at the station by His Majesty the King of Italy, the President of the Council, the Royal Commissary of Rome, the general commanding the Rome district, the President and Vice-Presidents of the Senate, the Ministers of Communications and Public Instruction, the Under-Secretaries of the Presidency of the Council and of the Colonies, the President of the Chamber, the President of the Provincial Council, the Chief of the National Militia, the Questor and the Prefect of Rome. He was accompanied by Ras Hailu, Governor of the Gojjam; Ras Guksa Aria, Governor of Borah; Ras Nado, Governor of Gorei; Dejazmach Gabra Sillassie, Governor of Adua; Dejazmach Gassessa, Dejazmach Moulu Gota, Dejazmach Haila Sillassie, Lijaba Dodaga, Belata Heroui, Makonen Indalqurachu and Ato Sahila Sadalon.

The Roman populace did not display much interest in the arrival, but this may be partly ascribed to the fact that it occurred in anticipation of the hour which had been announced and, in a greater degree, to the existing political situation, which leaves no room for public interest in any other matter.

The route from the station to the Quirinal was lined with troops, and Ras Tafari and his Royal host were applauded by the crowd when they appeared on the balcony of the palace. In the afternoon, after a private lunch at the palace, he and his suite proceeded to the grave of the unknown warrior and to the tombs of the Kings at the Pantheon and deposited wreaths. Afterwards they took a drive round Rome. In the evening there was a State dinner at the Quirinal, but, in accordance with the Paris and Brussels precedents, the Corps diplomatique was not invited, only Italian officials and notabilities being present. The toasts on this occasion have not yet been published, but I am endeavouring to obtain copies of them for your information.

Yesterday morning was spent in a visit to the electrical works at Terni, which supply the city of Rome, where lunch was taken. In the afternoon the Ras called on the President of the Council, and at 5.30 visited the Capitol. The dinner at the palace was private.

To-day he visits the principal monuments of Rome, and, after a private lunch at the palace, will attend a military display at Centocelle, outside the city. The dinner in the evening at the palace will be private.

For to-morrow morning the programme contains no arrangements, but in the afternoon the Ras will visit Tivoli, and in the evening he will attend a military dinner given in his honour by the Minister of War; after which he will be entertained by the municipality at the Capitol.

Sunday morning will be spent in visiting monuments, and, after a private lunch at the Quirinal, he will be entertained at a reception given by the Minister of the Colonies. The dinner at the palace will be private.

On Monday morning he will proceed to Bracciano, some 30 miles from Rome, to witness manoeuvres. The lunch at the Quirinal will be private, and in the afternoon he will visit the State military hospital on the Celio and the chief barracks of the Carabinieri. In the evening he is to be entertained at dinner by the President of the Council, and will afterwards leave for Spezia.

So far no invitations have been issued to the Corps diplomatique for the functions in honour of the Ras, except for the military exercises at Centocelle this afternoon and for the reception at the Capitol. In this respect the precedent already set at Paris and Brussels is, I understand, being followed.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
E. H. J. LESLIE.

[E 5312/484/1]

No. 32.

Mr. MacDonald to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 2054.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, June 24, 1924.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 348 of the 15th February, relative to the arms traffic in Abyssinia, I learn from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Addis Ababa that he has been informed by his Italian colleague that the latter has definite news that import permits have been granted by the Acting Governor of Jibuti, presumably with the knowledge of the French Minister at Addis Ababa, for 1 million

percussion caps and 3½ million cartridge-cases for Gras rifles. Moreover, a consignment of fifty-five boxes of cartridge cases has already arrived at Addis Ababa through the agency of a local French firm, one box of which has been secured by the Italian Legation, who are forwarding it to Rome.

2. I shall be glad if you will ascertain from the French Government whether the facts are as alleged, and if so, how such action can be reconciled with the arrangement agreed to in M. Poincaré's note of the 8th November last, which formed the enclosure in your Lordship's despatch No. 2535 of the 9th November. M. Poincaré stated in that note that he had no objection to the resumption of the discussions between the three Allied Ministers at Addis Ababa and a representative of the Ethiopian Government regarding questions of detail connected with the rationing of arms for that country. These discussions, which have been begun, but, for reasons connected with the journey of Ras Tafari to Europe, have of necessity been temporarily suspended, will be stultified if, during their progress, any one of the three Allied Powers permits large consignments of arms to be imported into Abyssinia.

3. Copies of this despatch are being sent to His Majesty's representatives at Rome and Addis Ababa.

I am, &c.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

[E 5547/697/1]

No. 33.

Sir R. Graham to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 574.)

Sir,

Rome, June 24, 1924.

IN reply to your telegram No. 102 of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to transmit a list of Ras Tafari's suite during his visit to Rome. As the Ras and his whole staff had already left Rome before I received your telegram, I regret that it was impossible for me to ascertain here whether the present list represents also the suite for his London visit, but that appears to me to be probable. Only the first two Ras on the enclosed list (besides Ras Tafari himself) were lodged at the Quirinal Palace; the rest of the suite were accommodated in a hotel in accordance with arrangements made by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Ras Tafari left Rome last night for Spezia, where he will to-day witness naval operations on board the Italian warship "Duilia." To-night he leaves Spezia for Turin, and to-morrow evening proceeds from Turin, via Modane, to Paris, where, it is understood, he intends to remain some time in order to consult an oculist. Neither the Ministry for Foreign Affairs nor the palace officials have any information as to the intended duration of the Ras's stay in Paris, but it will doubtless be possible for you, Sir, to ascertain this from His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris.

During his visit to Turin the Ras will inspect the Fiat motor works, where he will choose a Fiat automobile presented to him in honour of his visit by His Majesty the King of Italy. In addition to this gift, their Majesties the King and Queen of Italy have presented, through the Ras, a silver tea and coffee service and a travelling bag with silver and ivory fittings to the Empress of Ethiopia, as well as a platinum watch bracelet set with diamonds and sapphires and a smaller travelling bag with silver and ivory fittings to Ras Tafari's wife.

With reference to paragraph 4 of my despatch No. 566 of the 20th instant, I now enclose a translation of the King of Italy's toast at the official dinner given at the Quirinal Palace on the 18th instant. Neither this speech nor the Ras's reply has been published, and no copy of the latter is available either at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs or at the Quirinal Palace. The Ministry and palace officials inform me, however, that the Ras's speech was only a short message of thanks to their Italian Majesties, delivered apparently extempore in Amharic and translated sentence by sentence by an interpreter.

The programme of the visit reported in my above-mentioned despatch was fully carried out and, in addition, the Ras paid a visit to the Pope, on which, I understand, His Majesty's Minister to the Vatican is reporting separately.

I hope to report on the political aspect of the visit in a separate despatch.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

Enclosure 1 in No. 33.

List of Ras Taffari's Suite during his Visit to Rome.

RAS HAILU, Governor of Gojjam. Son of King Takla Haimanot of Gojjam.
 Ras Siyyum, Governor of part of Tigre. Son of Ras Mangasha and grandson of Emperor John.
 Ras Nado, C.B.E., Governor of Gorei. Represented Abyssinia on the League of Nations. Special Envoy to London in 1919.
 Dejazmach Gabra Silasse, Governor of Adua.
 Dejazmach Gessessa.
 Dejazmach Haila Silasse, Governor of Bale.
 Dejazmach Mulagedjta, Minister of Finance.
 Dejazmach Wandey Benessa.
 Ligaba Wadaju.
 Bilata Heroni, O.B.E., Judge of the Mixed Court.
 Lij Makonnen Indalqwachu.

Enclosure 2 in No. 33.

Royal Toast in Honour of His Imperial Highness Ras Taffari Maconnen, Hereditary Prince of Ethiopia, delivered by His Majesty the King of Italy on June 18, 1924.

(Translation.)

Imperial Highness,

I AM highly gratified to offer in the capital of my kingdom my cordial welcome to your Imperial Highness Ras Taffari Maconnen, Hereditary Prince of Ethiopia, and to the dignitaries who accompany you; this visit is all the more agreeable to me since it recalls that made to us several years ago by your illustrious and lamented father, Ras Maconnen.

My country has followed with the liveliest sympathy the fortunate ascent in the paths of prosperity and progress of the kingdom which the will of God has entrusted to your care—an ascent facilitated by a wise and constant policy of peace accompanied by ever greater and more harmonious contact between your Empire and the States of Europe.

I am certain that the enlightened mind of your Imperial Highness, which has already been able to leave on its country a strong impression of life, will draw from this visit to Italy a new impulse for the strengthening of the friendly relations which bind our two countries together in all fields of activity.

The Italian people is ever mindful and aware of the sentiments and attitude of cordial sympathy manifested and maintained by your Imperial Highness and by your Empire during the last great war, and my Government, which has been happy to support the entry of the Ethiopian Empire into the League of Nations, will leave nothing undone to render the relations happily existing between our two States always more trustful and intimate.

With these sentiments, and invoking the blessing of Heaven on Her Majesty the Empress Zaiditu, to whom I turn my thoughts, I raise my glass in honour of your Imperial Highness and of your family, and of the dignitaries who accompany you, wishing prosperity to your Empire and constant friendship between our two peoples.

[E 5614/697/1]

No. 34.

Sir R. Graham to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 585.)

Sir,

Rome, June 27, 1924.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 574 of the 24th instant, relative to the departure of Ras Taffari from Rome, I have the honour to report that up to the present nothing definite has transpired as to any political activities between the Ras and the Italian Government. It is probable that the extreme gravity of the internal situation during the whole time of the Ras's visit precluded Italian Ministers from broaching any serious negotiations, even if they had had such in contemplation. It was just the moment of the transfer of Signor Federzoni from the Ministry of Colonies to that of

Internal Affairs, and the former Ministry was taken over by the President of the Council himself, who, judging from my own experience, when I saw him a week ago, was then totally unable to turn his mind to any subject but the Matteotti crisis.

It has been suggested by a confidential source that the Italian Government may have thought of seizing the occasion to unload war material on the Ras on terms more advantageous than (it is understood) the French Government were prepared to offer him for such purchases. It is certainly the case that no trouble or expense was spared to imbue him with a sense of Italy's military and naval power. Besides a review on a large scale, he attended artillery practice outside Rome, visited various barracks of Italian regiments, and, on the day after his departure from Rome, was shown target-firing on board the warship "Duilio" at Spezia, and was taken a trip on a submarine; the success of the latter operations was considerably marred by bad weather. It is said that he was duly and favourably impressed with the efficiency of the army, the military organisation, and especially the artillery and armoured cars.

The same source states that no negotiations of a political or economic nature were initiated with him, but that it is hoped here that the visit may have conduced to some eventual results in the satisfactory regulation of the relations between Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland, and possibly in connection with concessions to Italians in Abyssinia.

A statement made by the Ras to the press was published in the "Mezzogiorno," of Naples, and quoted in a few Roman papers. According to this, he considered that the secret of future greatness and development for his country lay in friendship with Italy. He said he was a keen advocate of progress, and mentioned, in this connection, the importation of Italian engines into Abyssinia; he hoped for a future understanding with Italy about railway, agricultural and mining operations in Abyssinia, and he added that the Italian representative at Addis Ababa would bear witness to the fact that this had always been his policy, and he intended to convince his country of its wisdom. He might have come to Europe alone, but he wished that other important chiefs of his country should have the opportunity of getting to know and appreciate Italy—as they had done. The visit would consolidate Italo-Abyssinian relations, and he felt certain that the best policy for his nation was that of an identity of views with Italy.

During the Ras's stay in Rome His Majesty the King of Italy conferred on him the Grand Cordon of the Order of Saint Maurice and Saint Lazarus.

The press has paid little attention to the visit, beyond a daily programme of the Ras's movements in Rome, and the public none at all. As I have already pointed out, there has for the last fortnight been no room for thought about anything outside the internal situation.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

[E 5637/484/1]

No. 35.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 1421.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit copy of a note addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting the rationing of the supply of arms to the Abyssinian Government.

Paris, June 28, 1924.

Enclosure in No. 35.

The Marquess of Crewe to M. Herriot.

M. le Président du Conseil,

Paris, June 28, 1924.

ON the 15th February I had the honour to address a note to his Excellency M. Poincaré regarding the question of the rationing of the supply of arms to the Abyssinian Government.

I now have the honour, under instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to inform your Excellency that His Majesty's Government

has learned that import permits have been granted by the Acting Governor of Jibuti, presumably with the knowledge of the French Minister at Addis Ababa, for 1 million percussion caps and 3½ million cartridge-cases for Gras rifles. Moreover, a consignment of 55 boxes of cartridge-cases has already arrived at Addis Ababa through the agency of a local French firm.

I venture to remind your Excellency that, in a note (Direction politique) which M. Poincaré was so good as to address to me on the 8th November, 1923, he stated that he had no objection to the resumption of the discussions between the three Allied Ministers at Addis Ababa and a representative of the Ethiopian Government regarding questions of detail connected with the rationing of arms for that country. These discussions, which have been begun but for reasons connected with the journey of Ras Tafari to Europe have of necessity been temporarily suspended, will be stultified if, during their progress, any one of the three Allied Powers permits large consignments of arms to be imported into Abyssinia.

I therefore have the honour to enquire whether your Excellency will be so good as to inform me whether the facts of the case are as set out above, and I am directed to point out that, in the event of that being so, these facts can hardly be reconciled with the agreement contained in M. Poincaré's note above mentioned of the 8th November, 1923.

I have, &c.
CREWE.

[E 6165/697/1]

No. 36.

Record of Conversation between the Prime Minister and His Imperial Highness Tafari Makonnen at 9.30 A.M. on July 16, 1924, at No. 10, Downing Street.

IN addition to the Prime Minister and His Imperial Highness Tafari Makonnen, there were also present Messrs. Russell, Murray, Home and Zaphiro, the three Rases, Hailu, Seyyum and Nado, who accompanied Ras Tafari, Bilata Heroui and Gabra Silassie.

Ras Tafari opened the conversation by expressing the wish that the Abyssinian Government should obtain an outlet on the sea, and he hoped that the Prime Minister would be able to give him a definite and favourable reply.

The Prime Minister explained that he had not had an opportunity of considering this proposal before.

Ras Tafari did not press the proposal, and passed on to say that the Abyssinian Government had need of arms. They had constant trouble with Mahometans and pagans in the country, and in the old days they used to buy rifles to protect themselves. It was now difficult for them to import arms, and he asked how, in these circumstances, they could protect their country. They had need of rifles, and, according to the treaty, they had a right to obtain them.

The Prime Minister said that, so far as the British Government itself was concerned, it had been decided that it should in no circumstances supply arms to foreign Governments. As regards the particular request of the Abyssinian Government to be allowed to purchase arms, a decision had recently been come to by His Majesty's Government to consult their allies—namely, the French and Italians—and if possible to reach an agreement with them which would allow the importation of the arms required.

Ras Tafari said that in 1899 the Abyssinian Government allowed the Sudan Government to establish a trading post on the River Baro, but there was no question of customs duties being collected. The Abyssinian Government did not wish the Sudan Government to be collecting dues which amounted to collecting taxes in Abyssinian territory, for in the various treaties with the Abyssinian Government there was nothing which gave the Sudan Government any right to collect such dues.

The Prime Minister said that this question was new to him, but he pointed out that the dues collected at Gambeila were shared equally between the Sudan and the Abyssinian Governments and were collected impartially on goods crossing from the Sudan into Abyssinia and *vice versa*. According to his information trade was on the increase, which was the best indication that the dues imposed were not excessive, and he understood that the system worked well and very much to the advantage of the Abyssinian Government.

Ras Tafari then referred to frontier difficulties. He said that, according to the treaty with the British Government, the frontier was shown on the map by a red line,

but the treaty provided that it should be delimited on the ground by a joint Anglo-Abyssinian commission and clearly marked by beacons. This had not yet been done along the whole frontier.

The Prime Minister agreed that the delimitation was desirable, and said that he would make no difficulty about it. He hoped, however, that when the British members of the commission arrived at the frontier the Abyssinian members would be there to meet them and would not fail to turn up as had happened on previous occasions. He also hoped that the Abyssinian commissioners would have authority to settle questions relating to the boundary on the spot.

Ras Tafari replied that minor questions could be settled on the spot, but that bigger issues would have to be referred to the Central Government at Addis Ababa. He then referred to Lake Tsana, and said that the reason for which the Abyssinian Government had failed to come to an agreement about the use of the lake was not a spirit of unfriendliness towards the British Government, but simply that public opinion was opposed to the construction of the dam and believed that it would not be in the interest of Abyssinia. The Abyssinian Government had to consider public opinion. In the first British proposal it was said that certain churches on islands in the lake might be submerged, in which case compensation would be paid. Ras Tafari understood that the British Government were now prepared to promise that the churches would be undamaged and that the maximum level of the lake would not exceed that now reached in the rainy season.

The Prime Minister assented.

Ras Tafari then said that what was in their mind was that the Abyssinian Government itself should form an Abyssinian company which would construct the dam and would use the water for Abyssinian requirements, and any surplus would be sold by them to the Sudan Government.

The Prime Minister said that the British Government had had plenty of expensive experience of mistakes made in big engineering works and he had no desire that the Abyssinian Government should share such an unfortunate experience. He was not prepared to enter into any arrangement unless he was satisfied that the works had been properly designed and were going to be properly built, and he could not advise the Sudan Government to spend the large sums of money which would be necessary for the canalisation and preparation of the land until he had those assurances. He suggested that the Abyssinian Government should obtain the services of some thoroughly competent engineer, and he made the proposal that they should invite the Government of the United States to nominate such an engineer to report to them fully on the Tsana scheme.

Ras Tafari in reply said that of course the Abyssinian Government could obtain a competent engineer from America or from some other country, but that it was for them to select him, and that their whole idea was that they themselves were going to carry out the work and be entirely responsible for it.

The Prime Minister, in conclusion, said that rumours had reached him that the Abyssinian Government believed that the British desire to build a reservoir masked a wish to interfere with the independence of Abyssinia. The exact opposite was the case. Once the dam was in existence it would be an essential British interest to see that no foreign Power interfered with the independence of Abyssinia. He was glad to have had this opportunity of hearing the Abyssinian views, but he would ask them now to put them in writing so that they should remain on record in the Foreign Office archives and should be available for consideration, as the British Government would have counter-proposals to make.

[E 6316/360/1]

No. 37.

Mr. MacDonald to Ras Tafari.

Your Imperial Highness,

Foreign Office, July 19, 1924.

WITH reference to our conversation on the 16th July, on the subject of the proposed reservoir at Lake Tsana, I have endeavoured to summarise in the following paragraphs the heads of an agreement which might subsequently be concluded in due form between the British and Ethiopian Governments.

The Ethiopian Government will, in consultation with His Majesty's Government, appoint a fully-qualified engineer to examine the proposals of the Sudan Government for the construction of a reservoir at Lake Tsana and to report to the Ethiopian

Government upon them. In order that this engineer may be free from any suspicion of partiality towards any one of the European Powers principally interested in Abyssinia, His Majesty's Government suggest that he should be nominated by the United States Government, or, if the Ethiopian Government prefer, by the League of Nations.

The data already collected by the missions which have visited Lake Tsana will be placed at the disposal of this engineer and the works which the Sudan Government consider necessary in order to render the lake suitable for the storage of water will be explained to him on the spot.

His Majesty's Government suggest that the above-mentioned engineer shall commence his studies before the end of November 1925, and shall complete them by the end of November 1926. The Sudan Government, being the party interested in the project, are prepared, as a guarantee of good faith and in consideration of this agreement, to pay the Ethiopian Government a sum in annual instalments from which the latter will be able to defray all costs incurred by them in connection with the fees and expenses of the engineer referred to above.

If the engineer appointed by the Ethiopian Government reports that the reservoir can be constructed without detriment to the interests of the Ethiopian Government, the latter undertake to take all the necessary steps, for the construction of a dam, which would be operated for the benefit of the Sudan Government, in accordance with an agreement to this effect to be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the Ethiopian Government. This agreement shall be so worded as to provide that in no circumstances will the Ethiopian Government be involved in any financial expenditure in respect of the construction or maintenance of the dam, and that the Ethiopian Government will receive fair rent for its use.

I trust that your Imperial Highness will realise that in making these proposals I am doing my utmost to meet the views to which your Imperial Highness has given oral expression, and I shall be glad to hear whether your Imperial Highness is prepared to accept these proposals as the basis of an agreement.

I have, &c.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD

[E 6165/697/1]

No. 38.

Mr. MacDonald to Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby (Cairo).

(No. 752.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 22, 1924.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith the accompanying record of a conversation which I had with His Imperial Highness Tafari Makonnen on the 16th instant.* Your Lordship will observe that the question of the delimitation on the ground of the frontier between the Sudan and Abyssinia was raised and that I indicated that I was quite prepared to give favourable consideration to such a suggestion.

2. I shall be glad if you will ascertain whether the Sudan would be ready to undertake the task of demarcating the frontier, where this has not already been done, and, if so, which portion of the frontier should, in their opinion, be the first to be delimited.

3. Copies of this despatch have been communicated to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Addis Ababa and to Sir Lee Stack.

I am, &c.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

[E 6319/484/1]

No. 39.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 1577.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note from the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, dated the 19th July, respecting illicit arms traffic in Abyssinia.

Paris, July 21, 1924.

* No. 36.

Enclosure in No. 39.

M. Herriot to the Marquess of Crewe.

Paris, le 19 juillet 1924.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

PAR sa lettre du 28 juin dernier, votre Excellence a bien voulu me signaler qu'un certain nombre de caisses d'amorces et de douilles destinées à la fabrication de cartouches pour fusils Gras auraient été introduites en Éthiopie, avec l'assentiment du Gouverneur intérimaire de la Côte française des Somalis et du Ministre de la République à Addis-Ababa. Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique fait remarquer, à cette occasion, que des faits de cette nature se concilieraient difficilement avec l'acquiescement donné par M. Poincaré à la reprise du contrôle des Ministres des trois Puissances signataires de la convention de 1906.

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire savoir que j'entretiens de cette affaire M. le Ministre des Colonies et le Ministre de la République à Addis-Ababa.

Je dois, toutefois, vous signaler, dès maintenant, que la procédure acceptée par le Gouvernement de la République—"par esprit de conciliation," ainsi que je dois le faire remarquer une fois de plus—s'applique uniquement au contrôle du "trafic des armes et des munitions" en territoire abyssin: la convention de 1906, qui reste en vigueur jusqu'à ce que l'Éthiopie ait adhéré à la Convention de Saint-Germain, ne mentionne, en effet, que "les armes et les munitions," et non les parties détachées d'armes et à plus forte raison les matières premières ou même ouvrées destinées à la fabrication des munitions. De ce nombre sont évidemment les amorces et les douilles qui, ne constituant pas des munitions, ne font pas l'objet de la réglementation instituée par les Puissances en vue de l'application de la convention de 1906.

Veuillez, &c.

(Pour le Président du Conseil, &c.),
J. LAROCHE.

[E 6320/484/1]

No. 40.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 1594.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, dated the 22nd July, 1924, respecting the purchase of rifles and machine guns for the Regent of Abyssinia.

Paris, July 22, 1924.

Enclosure in No. 40.

Mr. Phipps to M. Renoult.

Paris, July 22, 1924.

M. le Ministre,

I HAVE the honour, under instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to inform your Excellency that His Majesty's Government have been approached by His Highness the Ras Tafari, the Regent of Abyssinia, with a request for permission to purchase 100 rifles and 6 machine guns for the use of his personal guard.

His Majesty's Government propose to place no obstacle in the way of these arms being ordered, provided that the French and Italian Governments are of the same opinion. I should therefore be glad if your Excellency would be so good as to inform me of the views of the French Government in this matter.

I have the honour to add that His Majesty's Ambassador in Rome is being instructed to address a similar communication to the Italian Government.

I have, &c.

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[E 6508/360/1]

No. 41.

Ras Tafari to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received July 29.)(Translation.)
(After Greetings.)

Your Excellency,

Hamle 19, 1917 (July 26, 1924).

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have received your letter of the 19th July, 1924, concerning the question of Lake Tsana.

You asked me about Lake Tsana on the 11th June, 1924, and you gave me an audience on the 17th July when I gave you my opinion on the subject orally.

Now my opinion on the subject is as follows:—

The Ethiopian Government in its own interest and for all other purposes is willing to build a dam in order to retain the waters of Lake Tsana.

It is also willing to rent to the Sudan Government the surplus waters of the said lake.

For this work it will engage the services of a capable engineer to examine beforehand what works require to be carried out in order that his work, when undertaken, shall be properly executed, and in order that its benefit shall not be lost. The Ethiopian Government will engage a competent and intelligent engineer to carry them out.

It, however, regrets that it is difficult for it to say that it will choose an engineer from any particular country. It is also difficult for the Ethiopian Government to state beforehand whether the work of examination will or will not be finished in a year. This opinion will rest with the engineer who will be engaged.

If the Sudan Government is willing to accept the proposal of the Ethiopian Government, the latter would ask the engineer to commence the work of examination in the month of January 1925.

After the engineer has finished his examination for the necessary works to be constructed for the erection of the dam at Lake Tsana, he will report to the Abyssinian Government as to the cost of the said work and of the erection of the dam. The Abyssinian Government will then compute the benefit that the Sudan Government will derive from the renting of the water of the lake. Upon such computation it will fix the amount which shall be paid annually to it by the Sudan Government for the renting of the said waters.

The British Government can give the reports and maps of the engineers who were already sent by the Sudan Government to examine the waters of Lake Tsana, so that these may assist the engineer to carry out his work.

After the engineer has finished the work of examination the Ethiopian Government and the Sudan Government will discuss the amount of money that will annually be paid to the Ethiopian Government for the waters, and also the period of the duration of the agreement and any other question in connection therewith. After this an agreement will be signed and the work will begin.

Your Excellency, the reason why we are doing all this is for the interest of both the Sudan and Ethiopian Governments and also for their mutual friendship, which friendship we hope will be increased and strengthened.

TAFFARI MAKONNEN.

[E 6319/484/1]

No. 42.

Mr. MacDonald to Marquis della Torretta.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, July 30, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris, acting on instructions from His Majesty's Government, recently invited the attention of the French Government to a report that import permits had been granted by the Acting Governor of Jibuti for the importation into Abyssinia of 1 million percussion caps and 3½ million cartridge cases for Gras rifles, and that a consignment of fifty-five boxes of cartridge cases had already reached Addis Ababa through the agency of a local French firm.

2. Lord Crewe reminded the French Government that in his note of the 8th November last M. Poincaré had agreed to the resumption of the discussions between

the three Allied Ministers at Addis Ababa and a representative of the Ethiopian Government regarding questions of detail connected with the rationing of arms for that country. These discussions, which had been temporarily suspended owing to the journey of Ras Tafari to Europe, would be stultified if during their progress any one of the three Allied Powers permitted large consignments of arms to be imported into Abyssinia.

3. Lord Crewe therefore enquired whether the facts of the case were as stated above, and pointed out that in this event they could hardly be reconciled with the terms of M. Poincaré's note referred to in the preceding paragraph.

4. The French Government have now replied to the effect that they are making enquiries regarding the facts of the French Minister for the Colonies and of the French Minister at Addis Ababa. They desired, however, to point out at once that the procedure accepted by them in "a spirit of conciliation" applied only to the control of "traffic in arms and munitions" in Abyssinian territory. The convention of 1906, which, in the opinion of the French Government, remains in force until such time as Ethiopia shall have acceded to the Arms Traffic Convention signed at Saint-Germain in 1919, refers only to "arms and munitions" and not to detached parts of arms and *a fortiori* not to raw materials or even partially prepared materials for the manufacture of munitions. Into this category the cartridge cases and percussion caps undoubtedly fell, and, not being munitions, they could not be held to come within the purview of the Ministers of the three Powers at Addis Ababa acting under the convention of 1906.

5. His Majesty's Government, on the other hand, maintain the view, which they have more than once expressed to the French Government, that the Arms Traffic Convention of the 10th September, 1919, has, in so far as the importation of arms into Abyssinia is concerned, superseded the treaty of the 13th December, 1906, and that the former instrument would form the basis of the discussions to be held at Addis Ababa. The fact that the Ethiopian Government have not yet acceded to the convention of 1919 does not, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, affect their contention that the action of the French authorities in admitting to Abyssinia these consignments of cartridge cases and percussion caps without the prior assent of the Italian and British Governments is irregular.

6. I shall be glad if you will inform me whether the Italian Government share the above view, and whether they propose to take up the matter with the French Government.

I have, &c.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

[E 6317/697/1]

No. 43.

Mr. MacDonald to Consul Bullock (Addis Ababa).

(No. 157.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 31, 1924.

RAS TAFFARI visited me at the Foreign Office on the 11th July, and I took the opportunity to have with him a political discussion which lasted for over an hour. His Imperial Highness was accompanied by Ras Hailu, Ras Siyyum, Ras Nado and Bilata Heroui. Mr. Home and Mr. Zaphiro acted as interpreters.

2. I began by raising the question of Abyssinian raids into British territory, giving the details of recent raids as set forth in the enclosed memorandum. Ras Tafari asked me, in reply, to believe that any violations of the British frontiers would be punished by the Abyssinian Government, who had, in point of fact, always punished the chiefs responsible for raids, but that they could not dismiss the important Governors under whom the minor chieftains served unless the complicity of the Governors could be proved. He emphasised the difficulties of administration in Abyssinia. When His Majesty's Minister had protested against violations of the frontier below Maji, the Governor and the men concerned had been summoned to Addis Ababa, but they had denied that they had ever crossed the frontier.

3. I replied that cases of violation of the frontier in the past had been so numerous that it was essential that some improvement should take place as soon as possible. The Abyssinian Government must see that further violations of the British frontier would not occur and that the raiders were properly punished. The Abyssinian Government

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should issue a special warning to their local authorities on this point, and the punishment should be severe. Ras Tafari assured me that he had done all in his power to improve matters in this direction. He recommended that the frontier (presumably that of South-Western Abyssinia) should be delimited as soon as possible by a boundary commission. I replied that in the past when there had been a question of frontier delimitation it had always fallen through, owing to the non-appearance of the necessary Abyssinian officials, but I promised to consider the matter and discuss it with His Imperial Highness at our next meeting.

4. I then referred to the administration of justice in Abyssinia, taking as my text the second memorandum enclosed herein. Ras Tafari stated that jurisdiction over foreigners in Abyssinia was based on the Franco-Ethiopian Treaty of 1906 negotiated by M. Kloboukowski. In pursuance of this treaty the Abyssinian Government had established a special court in 1922. His Majesty's Minister must surely be well aware that Ras Tafari was doing his best to improve the administration of justice. Before leaving Abyssinia, Ras Tafari had informed all foreign representatives that he would attempt to bring back with him a good judge from Europe. It remained his intention to do so.

5. I assured Ras Tafari that His Majesty's Government would be glad to assist him in the selection of a judge, should he so desire. It was important that this judge should be acceptable to the nations especially interested in Abyssinia, as otherwise he might merely serve to create friction between them. The utmost impartiality on the part of the judge was necessary, in order to create a feeling of confidence among Europeans in Abyssinia. For this reason it would probably be best to select as a judge a citizen of a nation not interested in Abyssinia. Ras Tafari assured me that he would, as far as possible, attempt to meet my wishes in the matter, but enquired why the judge should, necessarily, be a national of a small "neutral" country. I explained that, if the judge were appointed from one of the Powers principally interested in Abyssinia, I should at once be inclined to regard him with suspicion. I gave as an instance, the hypothetical case of two nations having rival interests in a country, and pointed out that a judge, in order to satisfy the two rivals, must be a national of neither, but of a third and disinterested State. Ras Tafari said that he must first of all consider the interests of his own country. I agreed, but emphasised that, subject to those interests, it would be most desirable for a European judge to be appointed. I explained that I would not sanction the appointment of an Englishman as a judge, even if it were suggested by the Abyssinian Government, because I was considering the interests of Abyssinia herself in the matter.

I am, &c.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

Enclosure 1 in No. 43

Note on Abyssinian Raids into British Territory.

(No. 1.)

A RAID took place on the 19th March, 1923, at Khor Daga Burun, in the South-Eastern Sudan. Four Sudanese were killed and two carried off to Abyssinia, though the Abyssinian Government claimed that these persons were Abyssinian-born. His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa protested to the Abyssinian Government, who claimed that the Sudanese frontier was not crossed. From investigations undertaken by the Sudan Government, it appears that the raid took place well inside the boundary of Sudanese territory. The Burun villages were attacked by a force of about 360 rifles, under Fitaurari Fanta, accompanied by Fitaurari Oda, Kanasmach Manuri and Kanasmach Chala. Ten Buruns were killed, including a chief, while two men, one woman and two children were captured. No Abyssinians were killed in the raid.

(No. 2.)

A raid took place in April 1923 near the southern end of Lake Rudolf. There was an encounter between a raiding party of eighty armed ivory-poachers and a detachment of our soldiers. His Majesty's Minister at Addis Ababa protested to the Abyssinian Government, which undertook to have the leader of the party sent to the capital for punishment.

(No. 3.)

In August 1923 a raid took place at Jigjiga, in Somaliland, which has formed the subject of correspondence with His Majesty's Legation at Addis Ababa and the Abyssinian Government. One British-protected subject was killed and the Gadabursi tribe was raided.

(No. 4.)

A raid took place on the 2nd September at Likitet, near Loima, Turkana, in Kenya. A fight ensued with a party of our soldiers.

(No. 5.)

A raid took place in October 1923, when a large party of Abyssinians, led by the local Governor in person, invaded a district of the South-Eastern Sudan, in the neighbourhood of the Ajuba River, with the purpose of looting and cattle-driving.

(No. 6.)

On the 26th January, 1924, a section of our soldiers surprised a party of Abyssinians on the River Sherifa (known to Abyssinians by that name—we call it the Rahad). The Abyssinians opened fire. The rifles captured from the Abyssinians bear the marks of Ras Gugsu and the Emperor Menelik.

(No. 7.)

In February 1924, on the way to the area referred to in raid No. 1, it was discovered that a further raid was in progress. The Abyssinians penetrated up the Khor Daga as far as Liss, with a force of about 200 rifles. They collected tribute from the local inhabitants and set up a mark which they described as the new boundary between the Sudan and Abyssinia. Several Nuers were captured, but later escaped. On this occasion the Burun villages were again raided, and, though most of the offenders had returned to Abyssinia about the 22nd February, sixteen remained, under Fitaurari Yambo, to collect tribute. This raid was carried out by people belonging to Fitaurari Mardassa, and was accompanied by Kanasmach Manuri, who had previous knowledge of the country, and a brother of Fitaurari Fanta. It appears to have been commanded by one Bogala.

(No. 8.)

Our soldiers patrolling on the River Dinder on the 26th March encountered a body of armed Abyssinians in Sudanese territory. A slight skirmish took place, in the course of which the Abyssinians fled.

A number of smaller raids took place in the course of 1923, to which no allusion is made. The attitude of the Abyssinians, generally speaking, has been one of contempt for treaty frontiers with any coterminous British colony or British-protected area. The Governors of the neighbouring territories have been obliged to set up police posts near the frontier to protect the natives from these incursions, and unnecessary expenditure has consequently been incurred. On the Sudanese frontier, activities of men like Dejazmatch Birru and Fitaurari Fanta are hostile. The British Government wish to know whether, in future, the Abyssinian Government will be prepared to remove from office, at the request of the British Minister, local officials whose complicity in raids the Governments of neighbouring territories may have been able to establish.

Enclosure 2 in No. 43.

Note on the Administration of Justice.

THE administration of justice is, as the Abyssinian Government are fully aware, not only a British but a European interest, which has lately attracted the attention of several European Governments. During the past year, especially, several foreign Governments have felt that the present state of affairs cannot well be allowed to continue without a proposal that some more satisfactory régime should be instituted. The Abyssinian Government, more than two years ago, informed His Majesty's Minister, in writing, that it was their intention to engage a European judge to try cases in which foreigners were concerned, and the foreign Legations in Addis Ababa recently made a joint request to the Abyssinian Government on the subject. As a

member of the League of Nations, it is clearly one of the duties of the Abyssinian Government to ensure justice for foreigners, which can only be adequately secured by the appointment of a qualified European judge to sit in the Special Court. In the view of His Majesty's Government, the judge of such a Special Court should be chosen from a nation having no special interest in Abyssinia.

His Majesty's Government would be glad to learn what the intentions of the Abyssinian Government in this matter are, and whether His Imperial Highness's Mission mean to take advantage of their visit to Europe to secure the services of a qualified person to undertake this high office.

[E 6551/484/1]

No. 44.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 1656.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a note from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, dated the 29th July, 1924, respecting the proposed purchase by Ras Tafari of arms for his personal guard.

Paris, July 30, 1924.

Enclosure in No. 44.

M. Renoult to Mr. Phipps.

M. le Chargé d'Affaires.

Paris, le 29 juillet 1924.

PAR votre lettre du 22 de ce mois, vous avez bien voulu me faire savoir que Son Altesse Ras Tafari, Régent de l'Empire d'Éthiopie, s'était adressé au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique en vue de l'acquisition de cent fusils et de six mitrailleuses pour l'armement de sa garde personnelle. Vous ajoutiez que le Gouvernement britannique se proposait de ne pas s'opposer à la livraison de ces armes, sous la condition que le Gouvernement français et le Gouvernement italien fussent d'accord avec lui.

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire savoir que le Gouvernement français n'a, en ce qui le concerne, aucune objection à ce que le Prince-Régent d'Éthiopie se procure les armes de guerre dont il s'agit. Son Altesse le Ras Tafari se propose, en effet, de confirmer son adhésion de principe à la Convention de Saint-Germain-en-Laye relative au contrôle du commerce des armes et des munitions, et le Gouvernement de la République estime, dans ces conditions, que l'Éthiopie a comme tous les États, membres de la Société des Nations, le droit de se procurer librement les armes nécessaires à la sauvegarde de son intégrité et de son indépendance.

Agréer, &c.

RENÉ RENOULT.

[E 6619/484/1]

No. 45.

Mr. MacDonald to Mr. Phipps (Paris).

[By Bag.]

(No. 215.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, August 5, 1924.

MY despatch No. 2337 of 21st July: Arms for Ras Tafari.

Please inform Ras Tafari that both French and Italian Governments have agreed, and that His Majesty's Government have therefore no objection whatever to his purchasing in England 100 rifles and 6 machine guns for the use of his personal guard.

[E 6782/484/1]

No. 46.

Sir R. Graham to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received August 8.)

(No. 691.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Rome presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith translation of a *note verbale* from the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs respecting Ras Tafari's request for arms.

Rome, August 5, 1924.

Enclosure in No. 46.

Note verbale.

(Translation.)

THE Ministry for Foreign Affairs has the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the British Embassy's *note verbale* of the 25th ultimo, in which, in communicating the request put forward to the British Government by His Imperial Highness Ras Tafari, Prince Regent of Ethiopia, for one hundred rifles and six machine guns, it was stated that the British Government had no objection to these arms being granted provided that the Italian and French Governments held no contrary opinions.

Since, as the Regent himself has given the assurance, the arms are destined exclusively for his personal guard, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has the honour to state that the Italian Government has no objection to raise on the subject.

Rome, August 4, 1924.

[E 6792/360/1]

No. 47.

Mr. MacDonald to Ras Tafari.

Your Imperial Highness,

Foreign Office, August 14, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have carefully considered the contents of the note which you addressed to me on the 26th ultimo on the subject of the proposed reservoir at Lake Tsana, and am happy to note that the course you suggest appears to offer a chance of an arrangement being reached which would be beneficial both to the Abyssinian Government and to the Sudan.

2. I shall be glad to learn whether the Abyssinian Government have in mind any particular engineer to whom they wish to entrust the preparation of the plans and the eventual supervision of the construction of the dam. Your Imperial Highness will realise that the success or failure of the whole scheme will depend on the competence of the engineer chosen, and it is only in the event of His Majesty's Government being satisfied on this point that they will be able to co-operate with the Abyssinian Government and discuss further arrangements on the lines proposed in your Imperial Highness's note.

I have, &c.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

[E 7680/363/1]

No. 48.

Mr. Bullock to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received September 9.)

(No. 67.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, August 19, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to state that on the 6th August I received despatches from His Majesty's consul at Maji stating that a serious raid had been made by Abyssinians from his district in British territory west of Lake Rudolf, and also that the local authorities were considerably exercised about alleged activities of British officers well within British territory.

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The following is an extract from a report by the Officer Commanding Troops, Kenya, Kakuma, Tutkana, the 6th May, 1924, forwarded to me by Mr. Consul Hodson:—

"As far as I can gather, it appears that, as soon as Mr. Hodson went on safari into the Sudan, presumably *en route* for Kitgum, Kanyazmatch Walde Yeasa, Gerazmatch Asha Geria and Kanyazmatch Nadi proceeded with a force of about 150 riflemen, mostly their own people, with a few men of Kanyazmatch Gabre Mariam, to Natodomeri, just north of Lorientum. Here the force split up into small parties, varying from fifteen to forty rifles, which were despatched in different directions and raided the following areas independently: Lokwanamur, Natapara, Meyen, Kalin, Labur, Akanimangan and Northern Morueris. All the cattle in these areas, together with the sheep and goats and donkeys, were taken, but only a few camels. These were driven across Sanderson's Gulf at Lomogol and into the Marile or Gallaba country. (I gather from my investigations that the Gallaba were assisting the Abyssinians and that their share of the spoils were the smaller animals unfit to be sent to Maji.)

"It appears that the spoils of this raid were many thousands of head of stock, and the whole of the natives inhabiting the British frontier zone have lost very considerably."

A few days previously I had received a note from the Abyssinian Government saying that in 1920 Major Dodds had promised Ras Taffari that British officials would neither make any buildings or levy taxes on Abyssinians in the neighbourhood of the present frontier west of Lake Rudolf, in view of its possible alteration in the near future. The note then stated that British activities in this area had been reported, and requested that instructions should be given for them to cease.

On looking up Major Dodds's report of his interview with Ras Taffari at the end of November 1920, I found that the above request had been made, but had been very definitely refused. I accordingly pointed this out to the Abyssinian Government.

On the 13th August I addressed a note to the Empress, of which copy is enclosed, complaining of the raid referred to above, and of a large caravan of ivory poachers from British territory. I also pointed out that, at the interview of 1920, Dejazmatch Desta had been strictly cautioned to observe the present frontier and had been promised a map of it. I finally urged on the Empress the necessity of taking strong repressive measures, as the only means of preventing similar occurrences in the future. I have not yet received a reply to either of these notes.

From what Mr. Hodson reports, the opinion appears to be prevalent in his district that we have bound ourselves not to increase our activities near the frontier west of Lake Rudolf, and there is probably also an assumption that we are contemplating the cession of a considerable area on that frontier. It is not improbable that the first assumption is a result of the second. For although I hardly think Ras Taffari can have privately revoked his order to Dejazmatch Desta, he may have told him that negotiations were proceeding regarding a readjustment of the frontier, and that the British were not likely to take much interest in an area which they were thinking of ceding to Abyssinia.

I have not received a report on the conference at Kitgum between Mr. Hodson and frontier officers of Kenya, Uganda and the Sudan, but I understand that the question of the Abyssinian frontier was discussed, and Mr. Hodson enquires whether its readjustment has been definitely abandoned, and if so, whether the present frontier will be definitely ratified.

I think it eminently desirable that if the question of readjustment is to be dropped, the fact should be made quite clear to the Abyssinian Government.

I am afraid that the suggestion of ratification of the frontier would incline the Abyssinians to think that the matter was not definitely settled, and that they would endeavour, on the contrary, to make readjustments of one sort or another, and that this would tend to increase frontier trouble at least until the matter is finally settled.

I am sending copies of this despatch to his Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-chief, Nairobi, and to Mr. Consul Hodson, Maji.

I have, &c.

G. H. BULLOCK,
Chargé d'Affaires.

Enclosure in No. 48.

Mr. Bullock to Her Majesty Zauditu, Empress of Ethiopia, Daughter of Emperor Menelik II.

(After Greetings.)

Your Majesty,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Majesty that during the early part of this year officers of Fitaurari Mashasha, with about 150 rifles, made a raid in British territory to the west of Lake Rudolf and carried off many thousand heads of cattle. The principal officers concerned were Kanyazmatch Woldeyes, Gerazmatch Andarge, Lij Rada, Ato Damaka and Gabra-Giorgis. Kanyazmatch Nade died during the raid.

About the beginning of June a large caravan of ivory poachers, with 169 porters, arrived at Maji from Tibitit (Toposa), which is British territory.

These proceedings by Abyssinians from the Maji district render it more desirable than before that the British officers should increase their activities in that area. I am also informed by the British consul at Maji that the Abyssinians at Maji pretend not to know where the frontier is. But, as mentioned in my last letter to your Majesty, his Highness Ras Taffari informed Dejazmatch Desta, in the presence of Major Dodds that he would be given a map of the frontier and that he was to observe it strictly.

I am aware that your Majesty wishes to preserve the friendly relations which at present exist between Abyssinia and the British Empire, I consequently hope that your Majesty will cause the most vigorous measures to be taken to prevent and punish outrages of this description. I should like to be able to persuade your Majesty that if these acts of officials in the provinces are not punished in an exemplary way, they are bound to occur again, either under the same officers and Governors or under their successors. And your Majesty, I am sure, realises that two neighbouring nations cannot remain for ever on friendly terms, when the subjects of one nation are allowed to make raids on the other without receiving adequate punishment.

G. H. BULLOCK.

Addis Ababa, August 13, 1924.

[E 7829/484/1]

No. 49.

Marquis della Torretta to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received September 12.)

(Translation.)

Sir,

Italian Embassy, London, September 7, 1924.

I HAVE communicated to the Italian Government your Excellency's note of the 30th July last, in which you were good enough to inform me that the British Government hold the Agreement of London of 1906 relating to the importation and traffic of arms in Abyssinia to be abrogated and replaced by the Convention of Saint-Germain of 1919, contrary to the view held by the French Government that the 1919 convention has not yet entered into force owing to the absence of the signature of the Abyssinian Government, whereas the 1906 agreement still remains in force.

The Italian Government for their part, consider that the 1906 agreement cannot be held to constitute "provisions of a general nature," and accordingly susceptible to abrogation under the terms of article 25 of the Convention of Saint-Germain. On the other hand, since the agreement of 1906 does not contain anything contrary to the provisions of the said convention, but prescribes practical and precise rules for the suppression of arms smuggling, it may instead be considered as an agreement complementary to the convention of 1919. Finally, as regards the latter, the Italian Government reject the thesis of the French Government which held that convention to be devoid of validity owing to the fact that it has not yet been signed by Abyssinia.

This diversity between the views of the British and Italian Governments may form the subject of future discussion between the two Governments. Such discussion may, however, be postponed for the moment, since it is not a matter of any urgency. On the other hand, in view of the identity of the conclusions at which both our Governments arrive in practice, it seems possible and desirable, meanwhile, that

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further steps should be taken at Paris by the two Governments acting in agreement, in order to rebut the French assertion respecting the freedom to import into Abyssinia raw materials for munitions.

The Italian Government consider that, with the above end in view, it is not necessary to raise for the present the question of the respective merits of the British and Italian standpoints, since the view maintained by France—namely that only the 1906 agreement is applicable to the case in point—can itself be carried to conclusions which are contrary to the French thesis itself.

Indeed, passing over the captiousness of the French argument which attempts to maintain that, for the purposes which the agreements restricting the traffic in arms have in view, it is not the same thing to import into Abyssinia arms already completed and munitions already manufactured, as to import parts of them and materials for their manufacture, it is a fact that by recognising the present validity of the 1906 agreement France must admit that in article 1 express reference is made to the terms of articles 8–12 of the Brussels General Act; of these articles No. 8 mentions the prohibition of the importation of "armes à feu et spécialement des armes rayées et perfectionnées, ainsi que de la poudre, des balles et des cartouches." The last-mentioned list must obviously comprise those materials (caps for Gras rifles and cartridge cases) referred to in the reply of the French Government to the British Ambassador at Paris.

The joint action of the British and Italian Governments at the Quai d'Orsay in refutation of the latter's point of view might for the present follow these lines, and the discussion respecting the validity of the 1906 agreement be reserved for later conversations between our two Governments, it being necessary to elucidate this point in order to achieve identity of attitudes between the British and Italian Governments.

Lastly, in view of the departure of Ras Tafari from France, the Italian Government consider it desirable that His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Paris should collaborate with his Italian colleague accredited to that post to make a joint *démarche* at the Quai d'Orsay with a view to obtain the rigid suppression of every form of smuggling in Abyssinia, and to emphasise the desirability of the earliest possible resumption at Addis Ababa of the negotiations between the Allied Ministers having for their objective the definite solution of the question.

Trusting that the views of the Italian Government set forth above are shared by the British Government.

I have, &c.
TORRETTA.

[E 7829/484/1]

No. 50.

Mr. MacDonald to M. Preziosi.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 3, 1924.

WITH reference to the note of the 7th September from the Marquis della Torretta relative to the arms traffic in Abyssinia, I have the honour to inform you that, after careful consideration of the arguments set forth therein, I am, to my regret, unable to share the view of the Italian Government that the Agreement of London of 1906, relative to the importation and traffic of arms in Abyssinia, has not been superseded by the Convention of Saint-Germain of 1919.

2. In view of this divergence of opinion, you will appreciate my inability to instruct His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris to make joint representations with his Italian colleague to the French Government regarding the recent importation into Abyssinia of cartridge cases and percussion caps. I am, however, glad to learn that the Italian Government, nevertheless, are prepared to raise this matter with the French Government on other grounds. I am therefore willing, if the Italian Government deliver a protest to the French Government in the sense suggested in your note under reply, to instruct Lord Crewe to support the action of his Italian colleague by addressing to the French Government a note in which, while maintaining the original thesis that the agreement of 1906 has now been superseded by the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919, he will employ, for the purpose of argument, the same reasoning as that adopted by the Italian Ambassador. It will be pointed out to the French Government that, even under the agreement of 1906, they are bound by article 8 of the Brussels General

Act of 1890 to observe the prohibition against the introduction into Abyssinia of material to be used for making ammunition. At the same time, Lord Crewe will be instructed to urge the resumption of the negotiations between the Allied Ministers at Addis Ababa for the rationing of the supply of arms to Abyssinia.

3. I shall therefore be glad to learn in due course whether the Italian Government maintain the intention expressed in his Excellency's note of protesting through their Ambassador in Paris to the French Government, in order that I may issue suitable instructions to Lord Crewe to co-operate with Baron Romano.

I have, &c.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.

[E 7407/1449/1]

No. 51.

Mr. MacDonald to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 1450.)

Foreign Office, October 20, 1924.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 585 of the 25th April, relative to the customs, harbour and railway charges at the port of Jibuti, I transmit to your Excellency the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Addis Ababa, from which it appears that the dues imposed at that port are sufficiently excessive to constitute a fiscal charge levied for the benefit of the French colony.

2. The whole subject has been carefully examined by the competent department of His Majesty's Government, and the following conclusion has been reached: From the information furnished by His Majesty's vice-consul at Jibuti and from the 1924 edition of the "Régime douanier des Colonies françaises" (Institut colonial, Marseilles), it appears that the duties at present levied by the customs authorities in that colony are those prescribed in a decree of the 6th August, 1921, namely:—

- (1.) *Droits de consommation* on all goods destined for consumption or use in the territories of French Somaliland.
- (2.) *Droits de contrôle et de vérification* (transport and exportation) on goods in transit by sea or by land, exported or re-exported by sea or by land.
- (3.) *Droits accés, naves et droits spéciaux*, including quay duties, statistical duties, tonnage duties, warehouse dues and a special "taxe de reconnaissance," on textiles only, these taxes being levied apparently on all goods alike, whether staying in the colony or passing through it.

3. The duties levied on goods in transit, *i.e.*, those in the second category ("Droits de contrôle et de vérification") are in many cases higher than, or the same, as the consumption duties, *i.e.*, the import duties proper, and in numerous other cases they are only half or even a less fraction of the consumption duties, but on the whole I am satisfied that the "droits de contrôle et de vérification" leviable on transit traffic are of the nature of customs duties and not in any way in respect of services rendered. The services rendered would presumably be covered by the quay and tonnage duties and some of the other special duties included in category (3).

4. In the case of cotton and woollen tissues in transit, these duties ("droits de contrôle et de vérification") take the form of the special "reconnaissance" tax, which is very much higher than the consumption duty: British goods for Abyssinia would apparently have to pay 140 fr. per ton in the case of cotton goods and 240 fr. per ton in the case of woollen goods, whereas the consumption duties for cotton and woollen goods would be only 20 fr. and 30 fr. respectively per ton. According to the "note spéciale" on p. 237 of the "Régime douanier des Colonies françaises," the special "taxe de reconnaissance" is imposed once ("simple") on goods imported for consumption, and though it is imposed only once on "transshipment" goods it is levied twice ("double") on transit goods.

5. The French Government in their note of the 4th September, 1922, stated that the customs regulations in French Somaliland would be so revised that the duties levied on transit goods would only cover the cost of services rendered. This revision has not yet taken place, and, as indicated above, His Majesty's Government are now satisfied that goods passing through Jibuti to and from Abyssinia are subject to a "fiscal transit duty levied for the benefit of the French colony or Treasury." Such a

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duty is contrary to the provisions of article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement respecting Abyssinia, signed by Great Britain, France and Italy on the 13th December, 1906.

6. There is, therefore, a clear case for a protest to the French Government against the imposition of these charges, and it is highly desirable to enlist the support of the Italian Government with a view to obtain a satisfactory solution. It is felt, however, that to resume the argument with the French Government on the lines of previous correspondence, which is summarised in Foreign Office memorandum of the 28th February, enclosed in my despatch No. 406 of the 20th March, would entail further delay and an indefinite postponement of a satisfactory settlement. His Majesty's Government, therefore, now propose that the Italian Government should be invited to support them in intimating to the French Government that they would, having regard to the provisions of the Freedom of Transit Convention, signed at Barcelona on the 20th April, 1921, be prepared to agree to an immediate modification of the Tripartite Agreement of 1906, whereby a duty calculated with reference to the additional cost of the customs administration attributable to the transit traffic, but not exceeding, say, 1 per cent., could be imposed. It will be within your recollection that under this convention, as an exception to the general principle that there shall be no dues in respect of transit, the imposition is permitted of a duty intended solely to defray expenses of supervision and administration entailed by such transit. It is also provided by article 10 of the convention that, while its provisions will not abrogate agreements on questions of transit concluded before the 1st May, 1921, the contracting States undertake, either on the termination of these agreements or when circumstances permit, to introduce into such agreements modifications required to bring them into harmony with the provisions of the Freedom of Transit Convention, so far as the geographical, economic or technical circumstances of the countries or areas concerned allow. The case now under discussion would appear to be one which might suitably be dealt with in this manner.

7. I therefore request that you will address the Italian Government in the above sense and invite their concurrence in the procedure now suggested by His Majesty's Government.

8. Copies of this despatch are being sent to His Majesty's representatives at Paris and Addis Ababa.

I am, &c.

J. RAMSAY MacDONALD.

[E 5867/1449/1]

Enclosure 1 in No. 51.

Mr. Bullock to Mr. MacDonald.

(No. 53.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, June 10, 1924.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 82 of the 24th April, I have the honour to inform you that I communicated your wishes to the British vice-consul at Jibuti, and enclose herein his reply to my letter. It appears that the charges in the port of Jibuti are sufficiently excessive to constitute a fiscal charge levied for the benefit of the French colony.

I have, &c.

G. H. BULLOCK.

Enclosure 2 in No. 51.

Vice-Consul Billing to Mr. Bullock.

Sir,

June 1, 1924.

IN reply to your letter of the 23rd May regarding customs duties in Jibuti, I have the honour to inform you as follows:—

1. The "droits de contrôle et vérification" have not yet been replaced, and goods "in transit" through Jibuti pay at the present time—

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| (a.) "Droit de statistique" | } "Droits accessoires" |
| (b.) "Droit de quai" | |
| (c.) "Droit de tonnage" | |

and "droit de vérification et de contrôle" on all goods other than cottons, woollens and silks, for which is charged "taxe de reconnaissance."

These charges are shown in Jibuti Customs Tariff, 1922, but are multiplied by a coefficient at present 2.

I attach extract of "droits accessoires." As regards the "droit de vérification et de contrôle," this varies according to the class of article. Examples are shown on separate sheet.

2. It is, of course, difficult to ascertain the exact employment of the revenue from these taxes, but I am informed by the president of the chamber of commerce that they are taken for the expenses of the administration and improvement of the colony, i.e., construction and repair of roads, port works, &c. This information is probably correct, as the only considerable source of revenue is provided by these taxes.

Of the 1923 revenue, he tells me 800,000 fr. have been put to reserve.

3. The duties at present in force (with the exception of the "droits accessoires") are certainly in excess of the services rendered, and can be considered as a fiscal charge on the imports and exports of Abyssinia.

Examples of the charges on various merchandise are shown on attached sheet.

I have, &c.

A. G. BILLING.

Enclosure 3 in No. 51.

Extract from "Droits accessoires."

Jibuti, May 1924.

"Droits de Quai." For goods in transit—

	Fr.
Parcel, 1-100 kilog. ...	0.15
Parcel, more than 100-200 kilog. ...	.25
Parcel, more than 200-300 kilog. ...	.35
(10 fr. for each 100 kilog. or fraction of 100 kilog.)	
Camel, horse, mule, per head ...	1.00
Donkey ...	.50
Ox ...	.40
Sheep and goats ...	.10
Merchandise, not packed, in bulk 1,000 kilog. ...	1.50
Salt, crude, per 1,000 kilog. ...	1.25
Yarns, cloths of all kinds, lingerie, made-up clothing of cotton, silk or wool: 1-100 kilog. ...	1.00
(0.25 fr. for every 100 kilog. or fraction above.)	

multiplied by
coefficient 2.

Exempted—

- Objects imported for account of the colony.
- Coal destined for steamship companies.
- Postal parcels.
- Fresh meats, fruits, vegetables and fresh fish.
- Personal effects accompanied by the passenger.
- Eggs and poultry on importation only.
- Transshipment parcels not landed.

"Droits de statistique." For goods in transit (charges to be multiplied by coefficient 2)—

- 0.20 fr. by parcel on merchandise in drums, cases, sacks and other packings.
- 0.30 fr. per 1,000 kilog. or per metre cube on merchandise in bulk.
- 0.20 fr. per head on living or slaughtered animals, horses, mules, oxen, asses, pigs or camels.
- 0.20 fr. per head on living animals not otherwise specified.
- Merchandise in bulk, charged other than on weight or by cubic metre, to pay at the rate of 0.30 fr. per 1,000 kilog.
- The duty of 0.300 fr. is a minimum.
- Transshipment goods will pay this duty, except those transhipped from all boats making transport connection for extreme East and Madagascar.
- The duty will only be chargeable once on goods being re-exported direct and on transshipment goods landed.

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Exemptions—

Consignment of funds from the Treasury.
 Luggage accompanying the passenger.
 Postal Parcels.
 Ships provisions and all goods embarked on French and foreign warships, including those for account of officers and men.
 Flotsam.
 Materials for troops in transit.
 Ballast and samples without value.
 Objects belonging to private collections.
 Parcels of all kinds imported for account of the colony, &c.
 Transshipment parcels not landed.

Exempt, on importation only—

Eggs, poultry and fresh vegetables.

"Droit de tonnage" (to be multiplied by coefficient 2)—

All goods, other than coal and salt, disembarked or embarked, 1,000 kilog., 3 fr.
 Not applicable to goods in transshipment for extreme East or Madagascar, when not landed.

Exempted on importation only—

Eggs, poultry and fresh vegetables.

"Taxe spéciale de Reconnaissance"—

Cotton cloth of all kinds, made-up or not, and cotton thread—	Fr.	
Per parcel up to 100 kilog. ...	7	} × coefficient 2
More than 100-200 kilog. ...	14	
More than 200-300 kilog. ...	21	
(And so on, with increase of 7 fr. per 100 kilog. or fraction thereof.)		

Silk cloth of all kinds, made-up or not, and silk thread—

	Fr.	
Per parcel up to 100 kilog. ...	14	} × coefficient 2
More than 100-200 kilog. ...	28	
More than 200-300 kilog. ...	42	
(And so on, with increase of 14 fr. per 100 kilog. or fraction thereof.)		

Woollen cloth, pure or mixed, of all kinds, made-up or not, and woollen thread—

	Fr.	
Per parcel up to 100 kilog. ...	10	} × coefficient 2
More than 100-200 kilog. ...	20	
More than 200-300 kilog. ...	30	
(And so on, with increase of 10 fr. per 100 kilog. or fraction thereof.)		

Salt, crude, imported or in transit: ton ...

"Droits de Vérification et de Contrôle"—

	Fr.	
Hides, per 1,000 kilog. ...	50	} × coefficient 2
Coffee, per 1,000 kilog. ...	40	
Wax, per 1,000 kilog. ...	50	
Dourah, per 1,000 kilog. ...	20	
Kerosene, per 1,000 kilog. ...	10	
Sugar, per 1,000 kilog. ...	25	
Soap, common, per 1,000 kilog. ...	20	
Rice, per 1,000 kilog. ...	20	
Foreign alcohol (spirits), 50°-79° hectol ...	200	
Foreign alcohol (spirits), 80° over hectol ...	300	
Ordinary wines, in barrel ...	4	
Wines in bottle ...	6	

[E 9490/484/1]

No. 52.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received November 1.)

(No. 2385.)

Sir,

Paris, October 31, 1924.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 3136 of the 6th October regarding the arms traffic in Abyssinia, I have the honour to report that a member of my staff yesterday saw the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, who communicated to him a copy of the enclosed draft note which he intends to address to the French Government on instructions from the Italian Government in regard to the recent importation into Abyssinia of cartridge cases and percussion caps. Signor Summonte pointed out that in the draft note an effort had been made to avoid reference to the difference of opinion existing between His Majesty's Government and the Italian Government in regard to the relative position of the London Agreement of 1906 and the Convention of Saint-Germain of 1919. It was explained to him that, as stated to Signor Preziosi in your note of the 3rd October, His Majesty's Government would be unable to make joint representations of an identic nature owing to the difference of opinion on this point. Signor Summonte urged, however, that the wording of his draft note was such that it might be possible for His Majesty's Government to address the French Government in practically identic terms. The note had, indeed, been drafted with this object. He suggested that, with the omission from the second paragraph of the words in brackets, "l'Ambassade d'Italie se réserve d'examiner cette question plus tard avec le Gouvernement de la République," the note as drafted might be adopted by His Majesty's Government.

I should be grateful for early instructions as to whether I may address the French Government as suggested.

I have, &c.
 CREWE.

Enclosure in No. 52.

Projet de Note.

L'AMBASSADE royale d'Italie a l'honneur d'attirer à nouveau l'attention du Ministère des Affaires étrangères sur le fait que l'importation en Éthiopie d'armes, munitions et pièces détachées (soit d'armes que de munitions) continue. Cet état de choses dure depuis longtemps malgré les accords en vigueur et les assurances que l'Ambassade royale avait, en son temps, reçues à la suite de ses nombreuses démarches par les organes compétents du Ministère des Affaires étrangères.

Sans entrer dans une discussion si c'est l'Accord de Londres de 1906 ou la Convention de Saint-Germain de 1919 qui doit être appliquée (l'Ambassade d'Italie se réserve d'examiner cette question plus tard avec le Gouvernement de la République), il est certain que la contrebande existe et qu'il est nécessaire, dans l'intérêt général, que les Gouvernements britannique, français et italien agissent d'accord, avec un esprit de bonne volonté réciproque, pour mettre fin à une situation anormale.

L'importation clandestine s'étant intensifiée dans ces derniers temps, surtout en ce qui concerne les douilles de cartouches et les capsules de percussion pour fusils, le Ministère des Affaires étrangères a fait connaître à l'Ambassade royale que les pièces détachées et les matières premières pour la fabrication des munitions n'étaient pas visées par l'accord de 1906.

Cet argument ne paraît pas admissible au Gouvernement royal, car, en permettant l'introduction en Éthiopie des pièces détachées et des éléments nécessaires à la fabrication des munitions, les Gouvernements britannique, français et italien permettraient ainsi indirectement la fabrication des armes et des munitions qu'ils ont voulu expressément empêcher. Indépendamment de cette considération, dont le Ministère des Affaires étrangères reconnaît sans peine le bien-fondé, il est, en outre, incontestable que l'accord de 1906 (article 1^{er}) se réfère à "l'Acte général de Bruxelles de 1890," qui, à l'article 8, vise l'importation "d'armes à feu et spécialement des armes rayées et perfectionnées, ainsi que la poudre, des balles et des cartouches."

L'Ambassade d'Italie aime à espérer que le Ministère des Affaires étrangères voudra s'employer afin que des instructions catégoriques soient envoyées aux autorités

françaises compétentes (surtout à celles de Djibouti) dans le but de faire cesser un état de choses qui pourrait avoir des conséquences fâcheuses, et elle lui saurait gré si, en même temps, des instructions étaient envoyées au représentant de la République à Addis-Ababa pour la reprise des pourparlers entre les Ministres alliés en vue d'une solution satisfaisante de la question.

[E 9540/1449/1]

No. 53.

Sir R. Graham to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received November 3.)

(No. 929.)

Sir,

Rome, October 27, 1924.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 1450 of the 20th October, I have the honour to report that, in accordance with your instructions, a note has been addressed to the Royal Italian Government in the sense indicated in the despatch under reference, and that the Italian Government have been asked to communicate their decision as soon as conveniently possible.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

[E 9553/353/1]

No. 54.

Mr. Bullock to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received November 3.)

(No. 74. Confidential.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, October 9, 1924.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith some notes regarding slavery conditions in the Maji district that I have received from Mr. Consul Hodson since his return from Uganda. I have communicated the contents of this memorandum to the French and Italian Legations at their request.

I have, &c.

G. H. BULLOCK.

Enclosure in No. 54.

Memorandum.

WOIZERO ASSALAFACH, wife of Dejazmatch Mukria, ex-Governor of Maji Province, before leaving for Addis Ababa, raided Shasha and Durhaba, not far from Maji, and captured ninety-three slaves. It is reported that the slaves were taken to Jimma and shared with Aba Jiffar, Sultan of Jimma. This occurred during His Majesty's consul's absence.

The Tishana natives in the neighbourhood of Shasha retaliated by attacking and driving out the Abyssinian garrison of Shasha Post. Mr. Hodson camped at Shasha Post shortly after the flight of the Abyssinians and was himself attacked there just before nightfall. The leader of the assailants is believed to have been killed in the first assault, and to this alone Mr. Hodson attributes his escape. His departure, with his party, during the night was unobserved. His Majesty's consul should have had an escort of fifty Abyssinians, but of them only five or six materialised; they gave a good account of themselves in the fight, doubtless guessing that their own lives depended on their valour.

Many reports have been received of considerable numbers of slaves being sent up to Addis Ababa through Bako.

The local Italian trader, whom I understand to be a recognised, if unofficial, agent of the Italian Government, reports that Dejazmatch Hapta Mikael, Governor of Kaffa, has continually been busy sending up gangs of slaves to Addis Ababa.

Dejazmatch Hapta Mikael is supposed to have been specially selected as a capable governor to put down slave-raiding in Kaffa, where the abuse was known to be particularly widespread, and destructive of the local population. He is at present under arrest on suspicion of having murdered his wife. I am informed that he is not guilty of this charge, but that his wife was a very rich woman, and that

either the Government or her relatives are trying to prevent him inheriting her estate.

Since Dejazmatch Hapta Mikael's departure from Kaffa, small slave-raiders have shown considerable activity.

The Italian trader states that, during Mr. Hodson's absence, Abyssinians have offered him slaves for sale.

A woman named Cheose, married to a Baluchi, and a British subject, was seized as a slave a long time ago, and passed through the hands of various owners. She recently escaped from Lij Tafessa, her last possessor, and appealed to His Majesty's consul to rescue her daughter, whom she had had to leave in Lij Tafessa's hands. Mr. Hodson failed to obtain her release, but the Abyssinian Government inform me that they have sent orders for both mother and daughter to be left at liberty. I have not yet heard if this order has been executed.

[E 9555/473/1]

No. 55.

Mr. Bullock to Mr. MacDonald.—(Received November 3.)

(No. 76.)

Sir,

Addis Ababa, October 14, 1924.

ON the 8th October I called on Ras Hailu of Gojam, in order to return his visit to this Legation a few days before. He received me with every expression of friendship, and after some casual conversation, dismissed his attendants, and started a confidential conversation, which lasted for three-quarters of an hour.

He began by saying that when he was at Paris the French reproached him for being the particular friend of the English, just as Dejazmatch Gabre Silassie was the special friend of the Italians. The French, however, had not asked for any concessions in Gojam. I asked him if the French were not seeking a concession regarding roads or transport in Gojam, as there was a rumour to that effect a few months ago. He replied that certainly no one had mentioned the question to him.

Ras Hailu then observed that the Italian Government had made him all sorts of offers, and had promised him machine guns and even cannon, some of which they proposed to send via Addis Ababa and some via Asmara. He had refused to receive anything via Addis Ababa, but had not yet decided about what they proposed to send by the northern route. The Italians asked him for mining concessions in Gojam, but not wishing to grant this request, he had invented, as an excuse for refusing it, the story that British subjects had already prospected in Gojam, and that he wished to avoid a collision between rival interests. He had also been approached on the subject of a railway from Asmara, and had replied that they had better consult the Governors of the other provinces through which the railway had to pass before it arrived at Gojam. Ras Hailu stated that the preliminary levelling of the northern end of this railway had already been effected, and is at present used as a camel road. I have no information as to the accuracy of this statement.

He then observed that he would like to encourage trade between Gojam and the Sudan, and he thought the trade route through Gallabat capable of development. The traders in Gojam were quite willing to carry their hides, wax, &c., to Gallabat, if they could find a ready market for them there. At present, the only good market was Addis Ababa, where the foreign merchants even sent agents to meet the caravans before their arrival in the town. A small amount of produce also goes to Eritrea.

The ordinary route to Gallabat passes through the Province of Gondar, where customs dues have to be paid; but these are not heavy. It would also be possible to avoid Gondar altogether by taking another route.

I believe if it was possible to create an adequate market in Gallabat, the importance of the trade route might increase, but I understand that parts of the country are not entirely free from robbers. Mr. Consul Home could, no doubt, make some observations on this question.

Ras Hailu then mentioned a purchase of a considerable amount of town property at Addis Ababa, which he has recently made from a British subject, and asked for my assistance in the matter. The completion of the transaction has long been delayed, as some of the title deeds have been held up by a protracted lawsuit. He thought that Ras Tafari did not regard with approval his acquisition of property in Addis Ababa.

I asked him whether he had any political reasons for objecting to the construction of a permanent bridge across the Blue Nile, as formerly a good bridge had

existed, and he admitted that the absence of bridges might be useful in certain eventualities. He added that there were a number of bridges in good condition within his province.

He appeared very pleased with the loan he had received in England from the Sudan Government, and said he was anxious to get back to Gojam so as to repay this loan. The French had told him that they would have been delighted to have accommodated him. The other Abyssinians, including Ras Tafari, were convinced that the British had given him a very large sum as a present. I informed him that both France and Italy owed very large sums to Great Britain, on which he observed that he understood that all three owed money to the United States. I replied that England was paying back her debt, but that the other nations had not yet begun to do so.

He remarked that he had paid all his expenses on the journey to Europe, but that the expenses of all the other members of the expedition had been met by the Abyssinian Government.

With the exception of Ras Kassa, whose custody of the person of Lij Yasu makes him an interesting figure in internal politics, Ras Hailu is, I believe, at present the only Ras of any importance or independence, due probably principally to his being, as the son of Negus Tekla Haimanot, the feudal chief of his province and not a nominee of the Central Government. Neither Guksa of Gondar, nor Guksa Araya of Tigre appear to be men of any energy of character.

I think Ras Hailu is contemplating the possibility of complications either with the Central Government or with Italy, and would like to be able to count at least on our friendly neutrality or political support in such an eventuality. He consequently takes every opportunity of showing and proving his friendship to Great Britain.

I have, &c.

G. H. BULLOCK.

[E 9490/484/1]

No. 56.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 3484.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1924.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 2385 of the 31st ultimo regarding the arms traffic in Abyssinia, I have to inform your Lordship that I see no objection to the adoption of the draft prepared by the Italian Chargé d'Affaires and I shall therefore be glad if you will address a note to the French Government omitting the clause in brackets in the second paragraph and making the necessary modifications in phraseology.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

[E 10534/484/1]

No. 57.

The Marquess of Crewe to Mr. Austen Chamberlain.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 2596.)

HIS Majesty's representative at Paris presents his compliments to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit herewith copy of a note from M. Herriot respecting the arms traffic in Abyssinia.

Paris, November 28, 1924.

Enclosure in No. 57.

M. Herriot to the Marquess of Crewe.

Paris, le 25 novembre 1924.

PAR sa note du 8 de ce mois, l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique à Paris a bien voulu attirer à nouveau l'attention du Ministère des Affaires étrangères sur la gravité des importations en Ethiopie d'armes, munitions et pièces détachées qui continueraient à se produire dans des conditions contraires aux traités et conventions.

L'importation clandestine se serait notamment intensifiée dans ces derniers temps, surtout en ce qui concerne les douilles de cartouches et les capsules de percussion pour fusils.

En ce qui concerne ce dernier point, il est, en effet, à la connaissance du Gouvernement français que la contrebande des pièces détachées a pris depuis quelque temps aux frontières abyssines une activité particulière. D'après les renseignements qui sont parvenus au Département, cette contrebande s'exerce au moins autant par Zeilah et par l'Erythrée que par le territoire de Djibouti, ce qui peut, dans une certaine mesure, s'expliquer par le fait que la surveillance est certainement moins facile sur le trafic par caravane que sur le trafic par chemins de fer.

Bien que la contrebande des pièces détachées serve plutôt à la fabrication d'une sorte de cartouches utilisées comme monnaie qu'à celle de munitions de guerre, le Gouvernement de la République n'est pas sans se préoccuper, comme le Gouvernement britannique, d'y mettre fin en ce qui le concerne et, dans un entretien avec le Chargé d'Affaires d'Italie à Paris, à la date du 11 mai dernier, le Directeur des Affaires politiques et commerciales a déjà donné à l'Ambassade d'Italie toutes les assurances nécessaires.

Sans entrer dans une discussion juridique sur l'application de la convention tripartite de 1906 aux importations soit d'armes et de munitions, soit de pièces détachées, il convient de constater que, depuis l'entrée de l'Ethiopie dans la Société des Nations, la valeur pratique de ce texte paraît avoir sensiblement diminuée. L'imminente adhésion de l'Ethiopie à la Convention de Saint-Germain du 10 septembre 1919 aurait nécessairement pour effet d'écarter le régime de l'accord tripartite. Lord Curzon l'a reconnu. Il écrivait, le 30 mars 1922, à l'Ambassadeur de la République à Londres: "De l'avis du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté, le traité du 13 décembre 1906 entre les trois Puissances—la France, la Grande-Bretagne et l'Italie—est annulé par la convention du 10 septembre 1919 sur le commerce des armes." A son tour, le 16 janvier 1924, le Président du Conseil, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, écrivait à l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté britannique: "Le jour où l'Empire d'Ethiopie, membre de la Société des Nations, aura, suivant l'esprit du pacte et le vœu de la quatrième assemblée, notifié son intention d'adhérer à la Convention de Saint-Germain, il aura tous les droits que cette convention confère aux autres parties contractantes."

Il semble, dans ces conditions, que c'est à la Société des Nations qu'il appartient désormais de contrôler le mouvement des armes introduites en Abyssinie sans que l'ancienne procédure de l'accord tripartite, incompatible avec le pacte, puisse être maintenue.

HERRIOT.

[E 10534/484/1]

No. 58.

Foreign Office to Colonial Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 11, 1924.

WITH reference to the letter from this Department of the 17th July regarding the arms traffic in Abyssinia, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Secretary of State for the Colonies, copies of the correspondence on this subject which has passed recently between the Italian Ambassador in London, this Department and His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris.

2. Mr. Chamberlain assumes that the Italian Government will not be satisfied with the reply furnished by the French Government on the 25th November, and in due course will consult with His Majesty's Government as to what steps it is advisable to take in order to persuade the French Government to adopt energetic measures to put an end to the importation of arms into Abyssinia through Jibuti. Though he regards their arguments as trivial and indicative of a desire to evade their just obligations, Mr. Chamberlain does not propose to reopen the question with the French Government until he is in receipt of the Italian Government's views. In the meanwhile, however, he would be glad to be furnished with Mr. Amery's observations regarding the allegation, contained in the second paragraph of the French note of the 25th ultimo, that arms are being imported into Abyssinia from British Somaliland through the port of Zeilah.

I am, &c.

D. G. OSBORNE.

[E 11738/484/1]

No. 59.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office. — (Received December 31.)

Sir,

Downing Street, December 30, 1924.

WITH reference to your letter of the 11th December, regarding the arms traffic in Abyssinia, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Amery to request you to inform Mr. Secretary Chamberlain that an opportunity was taken to consult the Governor of Somaliland, who is now in England, on the matter. A copy of a memorandum prepared by Colonel Summers is enclosed.

2. I am to observe that this memorandum definitely disposes of the suggestion of the French Government that arms are being imported into Abyssinia from British Somaliland through the port of Zeyla.

I am, &c.

J. FREDERICK N. GREEN.

Enclosure in No. 59.

Memorandum.

THE Government of the British Somaliland protectorate, which has nothing to gain and much to lose from the importation of arms and munitions, has always kept a careful lookout for illicit arms traffic along its coasts and through its ports. Recently, owing to the increase in traffic in arms and ammunition in the interior of the protectorate, I have instituted careful enquiries into the sources of supply, and the result has been to indicate that they lie beyond our border in French and Abyssinian territory. Careful supervision of the ports of British Somaliland has been exercised, and although a few instances have occurred of attempts to smuggle arms and ammunition, the former, as a rule, in dissembled component parts and the latter in very small quantities, our investigations have generally shown that the attempts to import arms and munitions along the British coast are extremely limited and that there is no import at all in anything but entirely trivial quantities. Such as they are, the imports usually have origin in Arabia and are bought in or near Aden and shipped hidden in other packages from Aden after eluding the harbour police. Occasionally they are brought from some other Arabian port. There are no imports, illicit or otherwise, direct from Europe except those authorised for Government use or for British officials for sporting purposes. I am confident that the importation of arms and munitions through Zeyla or any other port of British Somaliland is negligible, and that the suggestion contained in the note from the French Foreign Office of the 25th November, 1924, that native caravans obtain arms and ammunition in any quantity in Zeyla and import them into Abyssinia is entirely without foundation.

The importation of arms and ammunition across the long land frontiers, however, is fairly constant and most difficult to prevent. The demand for ammunition is great owing to its shortage in British territory and very high prices are obtainable. The enquiries we have instigated show that the supply is kept up to some extent by the filling of empty cases at Jig Jiffa, Harrar and Dire Dawa, all in Abyssinian territory, by Indians and Greeks who obtain the requisite breach caps and propelling charges from Jibuti. Investigations in the Zeyla District indicated that there was importation direct from Jibuti of whole cartridges and that caravans from Jibuti into Abyssinia which cross the south-west corner of the British Protectorate near Somadu carry ammunition into Abyssinia. Small parties of British Somali police attempting to examine these caravans in British territory have been driven off by strong armed escorts of the natives which accompany them and which are normally found with trading caravans. The presence of ammunition of French make and recent manufacture in the British Protectorate led me to make representations in friendly terms to the Governor of French Somaliland, but he constantly assured me that the import of ammunition from Jibuti was impossible owing to the strict surveillance exercised by the French authorities. Not long after, however, a native merchant of Zeyla went into Jibuti and there purchased fifteen hundred rounds of new French ammunition of various makes. He handed this over subsequently to the District Commissioner, Zeyla, giving full details as to the shops where he had purchased it, the quantities apparently available and prevailing prices, the methods

of packing for import and despatch into the interior and much other information of a similar nature concerning the traffic. This man had apparently no difficulty whatever in obtaining the ammunition or in removing it from Jibuti. He stated that he could have bought it in any quantity. When this was reported to me I again made representations to the French Governor, and in reply he assured me that he was instituting strict police enquiries, but could obtain no evidence of the facts reported by me. I had sent him specimen packets of the ammunition, which proved its French origin and manufacture beyond doubt.

I am convinced from the evidence I have heard that large quantities of ammunition and its constituents enter Abyssinian territory from Jibuti, and from Abyssinia as well as direct from French territory is imported into British Somaliland. The constant supply of ammunition is the cause of much unnecessary bloodshed and misery in this area of Africa, and I believe that if the supply could be cut off a great benefit would be conferred on the natives themselves and many of the hindrances to trade and administration would be removed. Constant fighting goes on beyond the British Somaliland frontier in Abyssinian territory, and the native caravan trade is crippled by the complete insecurity of the caravan routes beyond our borders. The traffic provides a constant menace to the security of peace and stability of trade within our borders. I fear, however, that it is too much to hope that the French will put an effective stop to this highly lucrative trade. My observations of course largely refer to the effects of the traffic in arms and ammunition on the British Somaliland Protectorate. I am not in a position to offer information regarding the carrying of arms and ammunition along the French railway into other parts of Abyssinia more removed from Somaliland, though the British Legation at Addis Ababa can doubtless do so. It is possible that most of the ammunition imported into Abyssinia is carried by caravans which pass regularly to and from Jibuti, but I am not at all sure of this.

G. H. SUMMERS.

December 21, 1924.